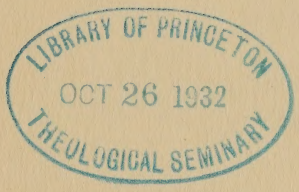
THE NEW RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

PALMER



Division 7

BV 1471 .P3 1932
Palmer, Leon Carlos, 1883-
The new religious education

THE NEW RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE NEW RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
OCT 26 1932
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

BY

LEON C. PALMER, B.D.

General Secretary, Brotherhood of St. Andrew in the United States

WITH FOREWORD BY

JOHN W. SUTER, JR.

Executive Secretary, Department of Religious Education of the National Council, Episcopal Church

MOREHOUSE PUBLISHING CO.

MILWAUKEE, WIS.

COPYRIGHT BY
MOREHOUSE PUBLISHING CO.
1932

CONTENTS

	PAGE
FOREWORD	vii
PREFACE	ix
EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLES	xi
I. THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL THEORY	1
II. THE MODERN CONCEPTION OF EDUCATION	15
III. MODERN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	25
IV. OBJECTIVES IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	35
V. THE PROCESS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION—"EXPERIENCE UNDER GUIDANCE"	49
VI. THE PROJECT IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	61
VII. BUILDING THE CURRICULUM	71
VIII. THE DISCUSSION GROUP METHOD	83
IX. THE USE OF BIBLICAL MATERIAL IN THE CURRICULUM OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	99
X. EDUCATION IN WORLD-FRIENDSHIP	110
XI. THE CHURCH AS A SCHOOL	122

FOREWORD

The pioneer pushes forward into unknown territory, extending the frontier and establishing new outposts. Later there follow the surveyor who measures what has been acquired, and the cartographer to make a map of it, enabling the average citizen to learn the points of the compass and to get a grasp of the general situation.

It is to the second category that this book belongs. Mr. Palmer is an excellent interpreter, surveying and measuring the generally-accepted findings of modern religious education and mapping the trend of the times. He has drawn a picture that is full of information, sensitive to perspective, and illuminating to anyone who would tread the path of contemporary educational procedure—a path that is still fresh, but rapidly gaining in definiteness.

By keeping his book short, selecting for his points of emphasis only what are really the essentials, the author has succeeded in giving us a fair-minded account that is both descriptive and persuasive. The book deserves to have many readers who will pay the author the compliment of not only reading his words, but giving heed to many thoughts, not expressed in the book, which those words must provoke.

JOHN W. SUTER, JR.

PREFACE

It is a common but none the less true statement that the present is preëminently a period of transition. This is the case in religion and in education, and it is especially true in religious education. To the thoughtful observer it is evident that the older methods of religious instruction are no longer effective. With full recognition of their contribution in the past, we must needs remember that "God fulfills Himself in many ways, lest one good custom should corrupt the world." The battle of Thermopylae was fought with weapons which, though the best of their time, would be tragically ineffective today; and it is no disparagement of Leonidas and his brave Spartans if we prefer modern weapons to their swords and shields.

Beyond question, the Sunday School, or as we now call it, the Church School, has been for generations one of the chief factors in the Christian nurture of youth and the extension of Christ's Kingdom. But if it is to function in the future as effectively as it has in the past, it must meet changed conditions with a changed technique. It must develop a sounder philosophy of education and discover more adequate methods for accomplishing its task.

For some years past there has been considerable theorizing and some experimentation in the field of religious education, particularly with reference to the adaptation and adoption of the principles enunciated by Professor Dewey and his followers. Marked differences of opinion and of practice have developed. We have witnessed in the same communion and in the same community practitioners of the Sulpician method and followers of Dr. Dewey; indeed, we might see the same children subjected to the one discipline on Sundays and enjoying the other on week days. We have seen published in our Church

lesson courses which consisted chiefly of rote memorization of ecclesiastical facts and theological definitions; and we have seen, on the other hand, some whose practice reminded us of the very "progressive" teacher who, on coming into the classroom each morning, would say: "Now, children, what shall we study today—if anything?"

In all this there has been, of course, much chaff, but some wheat. The author believes that the time has now come when we may at least begin to separate the wheat from the chaff and to make available to the Church at large what may be fairly called the assured results of modern educational thought applied to the problem of religious education. We are mindful of the injunction:

> "Be not the first by whom the new is tried,
> Nor yet the last to lay the old aside,"

and in this volume the attempt will be made to present neither the most advanced speculations of the theorists nor the traditional practice of the ultra-conservatives, but rather the generally accepted conclusions of progressive thinkers in this field.

Two years ago the author published a book entitled *Church School Organization and Administration,* in which he attempted to present in clear and succinct form the best methods of Church School work on the older and still commonly accepted basis, purposely omitting any consideration of the newer theories. The present volume may be considered in a sense the complement to that. It is believed that while the majority of our Church Schools at present and for some time in the future will be content with the older basis of organization and program, and for that reason should be provided for along the lines suggested in the former volume, there is a considerable and steadily increasing number who are ready for the new and, we believe, more adequate educational philosophy upon which the new religious education is based; and it is to meet this need that the present book has been written.

LEON C. PALMER.

EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLES

CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION *seeks to present fundamental theological, moral, and spiritual truths in such a way that they may become inwrought as actual experiences in the lives of all sorts and conditions of men. To this end we seek to employ scientifically sound methods, not relying upon compulsion, competition, and mere rote-learning. Our objective is to make the religion of the individual an organic part of his daily living, interpreting and fructifying all his activities. It is our purpose not to impose religion from without, but to evoke it from within, arousing the innate religious faculty which is the divine heritage of every human being. Religion so evoked will not only withstand the shocks of skepticism and materialism, but in spite of them will grow constantly throughout life as no mere verbal belief could ever do. We hold that the great need of the day is a living, personal experience of Jesus Christ and a wholehearted commitment to His cause.*

Such Religious Education implies

Communion with God and continual re-dedication to His will.

Allegiance to the Church as the instrument for the building of the Kingdom of God.

Willingness to seek truth, with reverence and without fear.

Respect for personality, enabling us to meet in Christ's spirit of love people of all ages and of all social, racial, and religious traditions.

A continuous effort to interpret the eternal principles of Christianity in terms of contemporary thought, and to make them effective in contemporary life.

Continuous growth toward Christlike character, through a progressively meaningful use of the sacraments and other resources of the Church.

Such Christian Religious Education is based on faith in

God the loving Father, whose sons we are.

He is the Author of a divine purpose with which we must set our lives in harmony.

Jesus Christ, the Master of Life, whose disciples we are.

Following Him, we live as sons of God and brothers of all men.

The Holy Spirit, in whom we have fellowship one with another.

Enlightening our minds and fortifying our wills, He helps us to make right choices.

—From *Findings in Religious Education,* published by the Department of Religious Education, National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

CHAPTER ONE

The Development of Educational Theory

Religious education is an art as old as humanity; it is now coming to be also a science. Even the earliest and least developed races of mankind have had some form of religion and some method of imparting a knowledge of that religion to their children; and for countless centuries, by many methods and with greater or less success, humanity has thus practised the art of education in religion. But the procedure followed has been determined usually by tradition or custom, without being subjected to analysis and scientific testing; and oftentimes this has resulted in retaining a method of instruction in religion long after its inadequacy has been recognized in every other field. For example, the following record was found some years ago in the minutes of a certain Philadelphia Sunday School: "Three boys have learned in eight weeks 672, 878, and 1,201 verses of Scripture, besides the (Presbyterian) Shorter Catechism; eighty scholars repeated a total of 12,221 verses of Scripture, 3,855 Catechism answers, and 1,933 verses of hymns." The record four years later laments the fact that, in spite of all this memorizing, there was no improvement in character! The persistence of the rote-memorization process in religious education, long after it has been discarded everywhere else, is one of the curiosities of educational history.

On a recent occasion the rector of a large city parish, who occupied also a position of diocesan leadership in religious education, was heard to drill his entire Sunday School, *en masse,* in repeating over and over again the phrase, "Jesus Christ is my Lord and King," completely oblivious to the fact that this exercise was largely meaningless to the little children and

stupidly childish for the young people of high school and junior college age.

A better day, however, is dawning. Education from an art is becoming a science, and the science in turn will give us a better art of education. In both general and religious education we are increasingly testing our procedure by scientific principles, realizing that the answer to the question of how to teach is contained in the answer to the prior question, of how the pupil is able to learn. And not only are we asking the question "How," we are asking also the more fundamental questions, "What should the child learn?" "Why should he learn it?" "What do we mean by learning?" "What is the object of education and of religious education?" "Exactly what do we desire to accomplish in the child's life by means of education?" When we have first answered these questions we shall be better able to determine questions of educational method, for methods must be based upon principles, practice upon philosophy, art upon science.

Three general principles will guide us as we consider the problems of religious education:

1. Religious education is a part of general education. Practically every outstanding educational thinker recognizes the fact that education in its broadest and truest sense must include education in religion and morals. "Religious education in its broadest sense lies at the basis of all the institutions of civilization" (Dr. William T. Harris, late U. S. Commissioner of Education). "All education culminates in religion" (G. Stanley Hall). "Exclude religion from education and you have no foundation on which to build moral character" (Charles W. Eliot).

In 1918 a committee of the National Education Association, under the chairmanship of the late Clarence D. Kingsley of Boston, issued a report on the Cardinal Objectives of Secondary Education. These seven objectives have become the new creed of the teachers of America. They are: (1) sound health, (2) worthy home membership, (3) mastery of the tools, technics,

and spirit of learning, (4) faithful citizenship, (5) vocational effectiveness, (6) wise use of leisure, (7) *ethical character.*

Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia University defines education as "a gradual adjustment to the spiritual possessions of the race"; and under the term "spiritual possessions" he includes the scientific inheritance, the literary inheritance, the esthetic inheritance, the institutional (or politico-social) inheritance, and the religious inheritance—to all five of which the child is entitled.

In the report of the Commission on Curriculum for Secondary Schools, published in the Sixth Year book of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association, the following statement appears: "The individual self, nature, society, and God—these four, and in particular the adjustments which the individual self must make—constitute the objectives of education." In regard to the fourth objective (adjustment to God) this statement was made, "No greater task rests upon the secondary school than to help its pupils to find their God. How this is to be done is the greatest of problems. Of one thing only are we sure; we cannot solve this problem by ignoring it."

In view of these statements by the foremost leaders in the field of general education, workers in the field of religious education may realize something of the high honor that is rightfully theirs, as representatives of that aspect of education which is admittedly the highest, most important, and most difficult. As someone has expressed it: "Religious Education is general education become conscious of its full objective and meaning." Secular education needs religious education to complete itself, otherwise it is but a maimed and imperfect thing. And since our separation of Church and State in America is interpreted as excluding religious instruction from the public school curriculum, what we have left is not a system of public education but a system of public schools, from which the most important element in education has been omitted—to be supplied,

if at all, by an outside voluntary institution. Religion is the cornerstone of any truly complete system of education, and to supply this cornerstone of the educational edifice is the high privilege and task of the Church today.

2. Religious education is based upon the same fundamental psychological principles as general education. The governing principles of any art are determined by the nature of the material with which it deals and the object that is to be attained, whether it be in painting, sculpture, architecture, music, oratory, poetry, medicine, or education. The material with which the educator deals is the developing human being. The laws governing that development are the principles of psychology, and all sound educational procedure (whether dealing with mathematics, geography, or religion) must be based upon the facts of psychology; while the use which we make of those facts is determined by our objective in education.

There is no reason to assume that the process by which a child learns a Bible verse differs in any way from the process by which he learns any other similar material, or that the memorization of abstract and unintelligible phrases in religion (in the hope that they will be understood later) will have any greater effect upon his life than the memorization of similarly meaningless material in geography or history.

Since therefore the objective in religious education is a part of the objective of general education in its fullest sense, and since the procedure in religious education must be based upon the same fundamental psychological facts and laws as general education, it is evident that the best preparation for a study of the principles of religious education is to be found in a review of the basic ideas in general education.

3. Educational theory must be viewed in the light of educational history. History, it has been said, is the truest philosophy, and certainly it is true that no one is equipped properly for the study of educational theory today unless he can view it in relation to educational theories of the past. Broadly speaking, there have been eight dominating conceptions of the purpose of edu-

cation, each of which has been in turn recognized as being inadequate by itself, and each of which has entered into and contributed to the modern viewpoint. We shall briefly review these, as an introduction to the modern conception of education and of religious education.

I. PRIMITIVE EDUCATION—FOR SELF-PRESERVATION

The education of primitive man consisted, first, in the training necessary to the satisfaction of the practical necessities of life—hunting, fishing, the use of weapons, preparation of shelter, etc.; and, second, in training in the elaborate procedure or forms of worship through which it was necessary for him to placate the spirit world. It was thus at once both practical and religious, but its objective was adjustment to a static and unchanging environment, for the preservation of the individual and the race. Its aim was to adjust the individual to his material and immaterial environment, in regard to both work and worship. (Monroe, *Textbook in the History of Education,* pp. 4-5.)

The same, of course, is true of races that are in a primitive or near primitive stage of development today. It is the group way of doing things that is forced upon the individual. The thought of changing the physical environment or the traditional customs is repugnant to him. As Spencer says, "The least developed peoples are the most averse to change." Primitive education thus takes for granted both the physical environment and the tribal customs, and seeks only to adjust the individual to these, primarily for the preservation of his life and the provision of food and shelter. It is essentially material in purpose, static in conception, and practical in method. It is only one step higher than the training of an animal.

II. ORIENTAL EDUCATION—FOR CONFORMITY

As a type of Oriental education we shall take the Chinese, because of the clearness with which it reflects its fundamental idea and the success with which it has been carried on for

something like thirty centuries by one of the largest nations in the world. "China has been civilized from time immemorial, and at every period of her long history she has preserved her national characteristics. For more than three thousand years an absolute uniformity characterized this immobile people. Everything is regulated by tradition; education is mechanical and formal." (Compayré, *History of Pedagogy,* p. 12.)

Within the past few years there have been many far-reaching and fundamental changes in China and their entire educational system is now being recast, but it will doubtless take two or three generations at least to change the racial ideals and attitudes upon which the old education was based. What the future holds for China it is yet too early to foresee; what Chinese education has been for the past three thousand years will be the basis of our consideration of it here.

The purpose of education with them was to train each individual in the "path of duty" which was essentially the maintenance of that which exists, without change or modification. The content of education consisted chiefly in the memorization of their literary classics and the ability to reproduce these, or essays composed in exact imitation of them, without the slightest departure from the style of the original. These sacred classics are in bulk equal to the entire Old and New Testaments, so that one who completes this task of memorization has performed a prodigious feat of memory, if nothing else. By a national system of rigid competitive examinations, those who had most perfectly memorized this material and can most accurately reproduce it or imitate it were sifted out and rewarded with the highest positions in the government. In short, the aim of the entire training was not to develop originality, but to repress it; not to develop creative power, but to foster imitative skill. And it must be said that for uncounted generations this system did accomplish its purpose—to maintain unchanged the customs, ideas, and ideals of their ancestors. Authority under such an educational scheme becomes stable, but remains stationary. Such a system of education aims simply to recapitulate the past, in

order that the individual of today may not vary from or advance beyond it. It is essentially education for conformity.

III. GREEK EDUCATION—FOR SELF-DEVELOPMENT

The Greek conception of education was at the furthest possible removed from the primitive man's "bread and butter" ideal, and also from the Oriental aim of rigid conformity to the past. The perfect and harmonious development of the individual was their educational ideal. A leading conception of Greek education was that of symmetry or harmony, "nothing too much." As Plato expressed it: "A good education is that which gives to the body and to the soul all the beauty and all the perfection of which they are capable"; or as Aristotle said: "The aim of life is living happily and beautifully." Their aim was an all-around culture; their ideal was "the beautiful and good" rather than the merely useful; and so far from aiming at conformity to the past, they encouraged the fullest possible originality and individuality. As Socrates expressed it, "Let us follow the argument wherever it leads." To quote a modern appreciation from Professor Butcher: "Greece first took up the task of equipping man with all that fits him for civil life and promotes his secular well-being; of unfolding and expanding every inborn faculty and energy, bodily and mental; of striving restlessly after the perfection of the whole and finding in this effort after an unattainable ideal that by which man becomes like unto the gods." (Monroe, *op. cit.*, p. 59.)

Professor Mahaffey expresses a sound historical judgment when he says: "In civilization itself, in mental power, in quickness of apprehension, in correctness of faith, in accuracy of judgment, no modern nation however well instructed has been able to equal by labored acquirements the inborn genius of the Greeks."

The aim of Greek education, in a word, was self-development—the perfection of the powers and capacities of the individual in himself and in his relation to the State.

IV. ROMAN EDUCATION—FOR UTILITY

The purpose of education as understood by the Romans was severely practical and utilitarian. "Rome did not imitate the Athenians in a disinterested pursuit of a perfect physical and intellectual development. Rome worked for practical ends; she was guided only by considerations of utility; she had no regard for ideals." (Compayré, *op. cit.*, p. 44.) Greece and Rome have thus furnished the world with two distinct types of education, and their modern representatives are seen in our classical and scientific courses, respectively. With the Romans, usefulness and effectiveness were the criteria of the worth of any idea.

The old Roman education began in the home, where the mother held a position of high honor and responsibility. The father trained the sons for the practical duties of a man and a citizen, and the mother trained the daughter to become a good housekeeper, wife, and mother. The purpose of their education was to produce good fathers, citizens, soldiers. In the later centuries Greek influence modified Roman practice; Rome having conquered Greece borrowed its religion, philosophy, and literature, and naturally borrowed also the school system that had been evolved to impart this culture. But at the same time Rome added some distinctively Roman elements.

"The Greeks had defined for all time those things that have been by all ages deemed the most worthy objects of the present life—esthetic enjoyment, intellectual power, moral personality, political freedom, social excellence—called culture. The work of the Romans was the practical one of furnishing the means, the institutions, or the machinery for realizing these ideals. The Greeks' tendency was to measure all things by the standards of reasonableness and harmony or proportion; the Roman tendency was to judge ever by the usefulness, the effectiveness, of the thing." (Monroe, p. 100.)

With the Romans, religion itself always remained a practical means for getting on in the world—a means for regulating everyday life; and naturally education could not be any

more idealistic: "As religion never inspired to any exalted view of life, so education never became more than a preparation for life's practical duties." (Monroe, p. 185.)

The physical training of the Greeks, for example, was for the purpose of developing grace of movement and harmony of development; but with the Romans it was for the purpose of developing physical strength and endurance for the martial camp or the work of the farm.

V. HEBREW EDUCATION—FOR GOODNESS

While China in her system of education was endeavoring to preserve the past unchanged, and Greece was seeking to develop harmoniously all the powers and faculties of the individual, and Rome was striving to make effective soldiers and farmers, the Hebrews were following after the ideal of moral goodness as their goal in education. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning (*i.e.,* the basic principle) of wisdom." The child was to become the faithful servant of Jehovah, and to this end it was only necessary that he should learn through language and through the instructive example of his parents the moral precepts and the religious beliefs of the nation. Intellectual culture was but an incident. The great thing was moral and religious instruction. Fathers taught their children the nation's history and the great events that had marked the destiny of the people of God. The Hebrews were a small and politically insignificant race; but their influence on education made itself felt through the Christian Church, especially after the conversion of Constantine and the establishment of Christianity as the religion of the Græco-Roman Empire. The Latin Church fathers, even those that had been educated by the teachers of oratory or rhetoric in Roman schools before their conversion, gradually came to reject pagan learning as undesirable for Christians (Cubberley, *History of Education,* p. 95). Pope Gregory the Great (A. D. 509-564) said that it was shameful that the language of the Bible should be subject to the rules of grammar.

"As a result, Hellenic learning declined rapidly in importance in

the West as the Church attained supremacy, and finally in 401 A.D. the Council of Carthage, largely at the instigation of St. Augustine, forbade the clergy to read any pagan author. In time Greek learning largely died out in the West and was for a long time almost entirely lost. Even the Greek language was forgotten and was not known again in the West for nearly a thousand years." (Cubberley, *op. cit.*, p. 95.)

The monastic schools preserved what was left of education and culture during the dark ages, but the emphasis in these was almost exclusively religious and moral. Much was lost through this one-sided attitude and was not recovered until the Renaissance; but the influence of the Christian Church, building upon the old Hebrew conception, made moral and religious character a permanent part of our conception of the goal of education.

The Romans had a genius for law and government, the Greeks for philosophy and beauty, the Hebrews for religion and righteousness. From these three distinctive racial contributions come the basic elements of our educational system.

VI. MEDIEVAL EDUCATION—FOR ECCLESIASTICAL TRAINING

Following the barbarian invasions and the fall of Rome in the fifth century, A. D., Europe entered upon a period of relative intellectual stagnation which lasted nearly a thousand years. During this time such education as was still available was directed chiefly to the training of the clergy in the monasteries and cathedral schools, and the inculcation of elementary religious and moral duties among the laity. The natural prejudice of the Church against the pagan literature of Greece and Rome, the barbarous character of the populace and their almost constant wars, and the ascetic tendency of the times, prevalent in the Church, share the responsibility for this neglect. For the most part a profound intellectual night descended upon Europe, until in the eleventh century Bishop Adalberic of Laon asserted that there was more than one bishop even who did not know the letters of the alphabet. Such learning as remained was preserved by the monasteries.

"Medieval education on the whole was narrowly technical. It prepared for but one profession. There was little that was liberal, cultural, or humanitarian about it; and except for the training of the monks themselves, or of the youths offered for monastic life, the monasteries made little provision during several centuries for schooling of any kind, and that little was chiefly of a religious character. . . . It was not until the eleventh century that there was any education to speak of outside of monastic schools and not until the thirteenth century that there occurred marked changes in the character of the education given in any institutions." (Monroe, pp. 259 and 261.)

In the twelfth century, scholasticism as a system of thought and educational activity developed. The essential purpose was

"to develop the power of formulating beliefs into logical system, of presenting and defending such logical statements of beliefs against all arguments that might be brought against them, without at the same time developing an attitude of mind that would be critical of the fundamental principles already established by authority." (Monroe, p. 294.)

It was an attempt to support authority by the intelligence and to supplement faith by reason.

VII. RENAISSANCE EDUCATION—FOR CULTURE

The Renaissance or revival of learning in the fifteenth century, followed by the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century, brought about marked changes in the conception of the purpose and content of education. The Greek and Latin classics were enthusiastically restored to the curriculum; education seemed to prepare more for useful and enjoyable life in this world instead of preparing exclusively for the next.

"The great educational contribution of the Renaissance was the recovery or reformulation of the conception of the liberal education, which included the physical, the esthetic, the moral, the literary, and social, as well as the abstract literary, theological, and ecclesiastical elements." (Monroe, p. 369.)

But by the seventeenth century the study of the humanities (*i.e.*, Greek and Latin classic literature) had become almost as formal and profitless as the narrow routine of scholasticism characteristic of the fourteenth century.

VIII. POST-REFORMATION EDUCATION—FOR MENTAL DISCIPLINE

In consequence of the change in character of the humanistic or classical education, it no longer had any connection with the practical demands of the times. Yet it had become so well established and so thoroughly organized in educational institutions of the State that instead of changing the content they found a new theory to justify its perpetuation. This new theory was, in substance, that the important thing in education was not the thing learned but the process of learning. This viewpoint—of education as being primarily a discipline of the mental faculties rather than the acquisition of fruitful knowledge—is associated with the name of John Locke, an English philosopher (1632-1704), and is reflected to the present day in many of the arguments for the retention of Latin in the curriculum.

Meanwhile, and for some time past, a number of educational reformers were in various countries and from various viewpoints assailing current educational practice. It would be impossible here even to summarize their contributions; we can but mention Rousseau with his appeal to "return to nature" in 1762, preceded by Comemius (1592-1660) taking the child as the guiding principle in education and sense perception as the basic process; and followed by Pestalozzi (1746-1827) who sought to reduce the educational process to a well-organized routine based on the natural and orderly development of the instincts, capacities, and powers of the growing child, introducing the study of natural objects instead of mere words, and proceeding from the concrete to the abstract—and to such effect that in general the arrangement of all modern text books is a direct outgrowth of his purpose and basic principles; Herbart (1776-1841) who conceived of education as the development of character through the cultivation of a many-sided interest and who gave us the conception of apperception (acquisition and interpretation of new knowledge through the use of the old), and who formulated a pedagogical technique (the

"Five Formal Steps" of preparation, presentation, association, generalization, and application) which has influenced educational procedure in this country more generally and lastingly than any other similar system; Froebel (1782-1852) who gave us the kindergarten and who conceived of the school as a place where the child should learn the important things of life, the essentials of truth, justice, free personality, responsibility, initiative, and the like, not by studying them but by living them out; and Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) who challenged the primacy of the classics in education and demanded that the sciences be given first place—resulting in giving to the world a new conception of the educational purpose as adjustment to the life one is to live; as he expressed it, "The purpose of education is to prepare us for complete living." This brings us down to the latter part of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth, and to what may be called the present-day conception of education, with which is associated the name of John Dewey (1859 —)as the most influential figure and outstanding representative.

IX. MODERN EDUCATION—FOR SOCIAL EFFICIENCY

Starting from Spencer's definition of education as "preparation for complete living," Dewey asserted that "the school cannot be a preparation for social living except as it reproduces the typical conditions of social living"; and therefore that "the school should be life, not merely preparation for life." Believing that the primary purpose of the school is to train in cooperative and mutually helpful living, Professor Dewey has tried to show how to change the work of the school so as to make it a miniature of society itself. Not mere knowledge but social efficiency he conceives to be the end of education. "The work of the school is in large part to reduce the complexity of modern life to such terms as children can understand, and to introduce the child to modern life through simplified experiences." It is not too much to say that the writings of Professor Dewey are today the most powerful influence in the

educational world, and his principles are the basis of much of the progressive education of the present day. And not only so, but when translated into terms of religious education, essentially the same educational philosophy is being rapidly adopted as the basis of modern religious education. In this development Professor George A. Coe has pioneered and is a leader today. The school (whether "secular" or "religious") is planned as a simplified cross-section of life, in which the pupils experience the problems and situations of real life and are led to make desired reactions and social adjustments thereto. One of the outcomes of this philosophy of education has been the "social project" principle in teaching and the "experience-centred curriculum" ideal which is the next step in religious education. These will be discussed in succeeding chapters.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Monroe, *Textbook in the History of Education.*
Cubberley, *The History of Education.*
Compayré, *History of Pedagogy.*
Graves, *History of Education.*
Quick, *Educational Reformers.*

CHAPTER TWO

The Modern Conception of Education

Building upon the foundations of the past and conserving whatever of good has been attained in the educational theory and practice of former generations, we are today working out a new and larger conception of the meaning of education and a more efficient method for accomplishing our objectives.

In addition to the racial and individual contributions to educational theory in the past, mentioned in the preceding chapter, numerous present-day thinkers (including philosophers, psychologists, teachers, and religious leaders) are giving their best thought to the development of a system of education in this country which in its aims shall represent the highest ideal and noblest vision possible to man, and in its method shall accord most closely with the facts of human life and human nature as established by the Creator.

It is being increasingly recognized that each of the educational aims of the past, although containing much of good, has been in some respects incomplete and inadequate. They need to be brought together in a larger synthesis and unified from a higher viewpoint. It is also realized by all students of education that the methods used have in large measure failed to produce satisfactory results—largely because they have been founded on an inadequate psychology and a faulty conception of the learning process.

The new education, in which America has taken the lead, owes much to many thinkers but to none more than to John Dewey. One need not accept his philosophy as a whole or fail to recognize its evident defects from a Christian point

of view; it is sufficient to say that he has affected educational thought and practice in America more than any other man of his generation, and his viewpoint on the whole represents a great step forward. Like most educational reformers —Socrates, Rousseau, Froebel, Spencer, and others—he represents an extreme and consequently one-sided viewpoint; but of the real value of his contribution there can be no doubt. In addition to this constructive influence upon public education, his general viewpoint has been taken up by others, modified, and applied to religious education; and this has been the inspiration for many of the recent fundamental changes in that field.

The new viewpoint in education is expressed in a new conception of the aim of education and a new technique for the process of educating.

I. THE AIM OF EDUCATION

The new education holds that certain conceptions of the purpose of education which have been familiar to us are incomplete and inadequate. For example:

(1) *The acquisition of knowledge.* This is perhaps the commonest and likewise the poorest definition of education. An educated person, it is held, is one who knows more than others, and the more one knows the better he is educated.

But mere knowledge as an aim omits at least two-thirds of our mental life—the feeling and the will. It is apt to become theoretical and "bookish" and divorced from real life. It is purely individualistic and lends itself easily to a selfish attitude toward others. The prevalence of this conception of the purpose of education is largely responsible for the critical attitude toward education frequently found among men of practical affairs.

(2) *Mental discipline.* In contrast with this, the view held by John Locke and his followers (see page 12) that the value of education consists not in what we learn but in the exercise and (supposed) strengthening of the mental powers

through the process of learning, is set in sharp contrast. From this viewpoint the school is looked upon as being a kind of mental gymnasium for the strengthening of the muscles of the mind through practice in doing things which may be in themselves of little or no significance. It is assumed, for example, that the power to reason accurately, acquired in the higher mathematics, is "transferred" to other subjects also, so that it enables one to reason well in all the situations of life.

The three weaknesses which are to be noticed in this conception are:

(a) First and most important, there is no evidence that the "transfer" of training assumed in this theory actually takes place. On the contrary, there is considerable evidence that no such transfer takes place except insofar as the two subjects deal with identical elements.

(b) The possession of highly trained faculties, even if assured under this theory, affords no guarantee for their use in the right direction. Of such persons it has been well said, "Any man who has been trained in mind but not in morals is a menace to society."

(c) No ideal for life, no motive for the highest use of one's powers, is offered by this system.

(3) *Individual perfection.* From the days of Plato to the present time a persisting ideal in education has been *"perfice te,"* the complete and harmonious development of all one's powers. Concerning this, it is to be said:

(a) It is undesirable—there are some powers that we do not wish to develop but rather to discourage.

(b) Specialization today is desirable both for the individual and for the community. In addition to an elementary general development, each one should specialize in the direction indicated by his nature. It would have been undesirable to attempt to develop Pasteur as a storekeeper or Darwin as a musician or Edison as an orator or Henry Ford as a poet.

(c) The ideal of perfecting oneself easily leads to a spirit of competitive display.

(4) *Passive adjustment.* Education is sometimes spoken of as social adjustment and Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler defined it as the gradual adjustment to the spiritual possessions of the race. Taken strictly, this would lead to a static civilization like that of China for many centuries. It suggests the acceptance of the world as it is and the adjustment of the individual to it. Education on the contrary should inspire the individual to be dissatisfied with the *status quo* and inspire and enable him to labor for the betterment of himself and of his fellow human beings. The savage is "adjusted" to nature and accepts things as they are. The civilized man is the one who ceaselessly endeavors to adjust nature to himself.

(5) *Preparation for life.* The conception of education which is most closely akin to that of the new education is that expressed by Herbert Spencer in his famous definition, "Education is preparation for complete living," referred to in the preceding chapter. With the spirit of this we are content; but we regard the statement of it as faulty in three respects:

(a) By considering childhood as a period of "preparation *for* life" (by which is understood adult life), it subordinates childhood to adulthood and assumes that in the school we are not "living" but only "preparing to live." We hold, on the contrary, that child life is just as truly living and just as worthy of being called "life" as is adult life; and that it is at least as important for the child to "live" today as it is to prepare to "live" twenty years hence.

(b) It overlooks the fact that (even in "preparing to live") the best way to learn a thing is to do it. We learn by doing. We learn to live fully and worthily as adults by living fully and worthily as children. It creates an artificial and unreal distinction between "preparation for life" and "life" itself.

(c) It thus assumes that education is a temporary episode rather than a continuing process throughout life.

Let us now suggest a three-word definition of the aim of education, namely: *"Progressive social efficiency."* Each of these words will bear analysis.

(a) *Progressive.* (1) Education is never completed. In the sense of "the modification of behavior through experience" (Moxcey), informal education begins in earliest infancy; formal education in school and college accelerates and helps direct the process; the experiences of adult life to a greater or less extent (depending upon one's maintenance of the teachable attitude) continue it. We are never educated; we are only in process of being educated.

One of the recent emphases in the educational world is upon adult education—the feasibility of continuing even formal education throughout the larger part of adult life, with scarcely diminished effectiveness.

(2) As we consider the remaining two words of our definition, we shall see that education itself (as here defined) is its own goal. It has no objective external to itself. It is its own objective. As Dewey says, "The aim of education is to enable individuals to continue their education. The object and reward of true learning is continued capacity for growth." (*Democracy and Education,* p. 117.)

(b) *Social.* This word is used to designate man's entire personal environment, both human and divine. The educator must here face frankly the alternative between theism and materialism. Either there is a God or there is not.

If there is no God, then all we have to do is to consider right relations with our fellowmen; they constitute our "social environment." But if there is a God, then obviously any definition or consideration of our social environment and relationship, which omits God, omits the most fundamental and important factor, and thereby condemns itself as being, in that respect, a seriously inadequate philosophy of education. Here is where Professor Dewey, in spite of his wonderful contributions in many ways, fails us as a competent guide. In his most fundamental book, *Democracy and Education,* which bears the sub-title *Philosophy of Education,* there is practically no mention whatever of God or of religion except a passing allusion to conflict between religion and science. Although de-

fining education somewhat as we have done here, as meaning adjustment to our social environment and efficiency therein, he omits the greatest single factor in that environment and the most important personal relationship of life. It will not do for an educational leader to attempt neutrality by taking an agnostic position at this point, and simply omit without denying the divine factor. For all practical intents and purposes, to omit is to deny. The choice between theism and non-theism is what the late Professor James would have called a "forced option"—one must make the choice, for to refuse to choose is itself to make a choice in the negative. And so, while accepting Professor Dewey's conception of education as social adjustment and efficiency, we must apply it in a larger way by including the divine as well as the human factor in our social environment.

Education, therefore, seeks right social relationships—right relations with God and with men. Neither of these can long exist without the other. Education must seek to develop both, else it is no true education but only a distorted fragment.

And not only does education seek social adjustment (*i.e.,* right relations with our fellowmen and with God), it seeks also the cultivation of the social motive as distinguished from the purely individualistic motive, as the impelling force and guiding principle in life. The man who chooses and follows his calling merely because of what it means to him in financial rewards and personal satisfactions is not acting from a truly social motive.

(c) *Efficiency.* By this is meant: (1) Adjustment to environment, and (2) control of environment—*i.e.,* ability to modify it in desired directions. Stressing the latter aspect, Professor Klapper says, "Adjustment means not that the individual fits himself to the world, but that he makes the world fit him." (*Principles of Educational Practice,* p. 18.)

Obviously, one of the objects of education is to give a person a knowledge of the world about him—the natural and social sciences—so that he may both adjust himself to these, and at the same time be enabled to utilize them for his own

purposes and, where desirable, effect modifications in them (through invention and industry, education and religion).

And so, expanding our initial definition a little for the sake of greater clearness, we may say: *The aim of education is a progressive adjustment to and control of our material and social environment.*

II. THE PROCESS OF EDUCATING

From the above it will be seen that the object of education as now understood is not a mastery of subject matter, but a mastery of situations—the ability to react rightly and successfully to the various situations of life in our relations both to persons and to things.

How is this ability to be developed? Here we come to the matter of method—the *process* of education, which is the second respect in which the new education differs from the old. Briefly stated, the new education holds that the fundamental process in educating is:

(1) Providing for the pupil experiences which (a) reproduce in simplified form the typical situations and relationships of life, and (b) afford a problem and a motive for a solution—an objective and an incentive for its attainment.

(2) Offering such guidance, and only such, as is necessary in solving the problem or attaining the objective.

(3) Encouraging social motivation and social coöperation in the process of solving the problem or attaining the objective.

In other words, thinking is primarily instrumental and only secondarily representative. Its chief purpose is to enable us to solve problems, attain objectives, overcome difficulties. Thinking begins when problems develop, and is effective in proportion to the complexity of the problem and the strength of the incentive for its solution.

The principles underlying the educational process may be briefly stated as follows:

(1) *We learn by doing.*

The story of the man who took a correspondence school

course in swimming, graduated with honors, and drowned the first time he went into the water, is a forceful though perhaps apocryphal illustration of the opposite of this method. Whether it be swimming, riding a bicycle, learning to read, acquiring a foreign language, grasping the elementary conceptions of arithmetic, developing artistic skill, or learning to worship God —the process is essentially the same. Observation of the methods used in teaching almost any subject in progressive modern schools today will afford abundant illustrations of this principle in operation.

(2) *A definite purpose chosen or accepted by the pupil leads to vital interest and persistent effort.*

A ten-year old boy decided that he wanted to be a chemist when he grew up. For lack of a text book on chemistry, he toiled through thousands of pages of an encyclopedia, noting every article about a chemical element or chemical process, and copying down in longhand an abstract of these. While the result could hardly be called a text book on chemistry, it at least gave him an introduction to the terms and elementary processes of chemistry, and laid the foundation for a lifelong interest in the subject. No teacher would have dared to assign to a boy the amount of "home study" that this represented—but he did it voluntarily and with enthusiasm because it was carrying out a definite purpose of his own.

Many boys have made radio sets and in so doing have acquired a considerable amount of knowledge of physics and electrical science as a by-product. This knowledge having been acquired in the fulfillment of their own purposes, and immediately utilized therein, is more clearly understood and more likely to be permanently remembered than the same information would be if it had been given them in the ordinary course of text book study.

Two third grade children, seven and eight years of age respectively, were enlisted in a grade project to find out about the different kinds of material used for clothing. For days and weeks they asked questions and searched through various

books (not only children's reference books such as *The Book of Knowledge, Our Wonder World,* and others similar, but even an occasional excursion into the *Encyclopedia Britannica*), learning about cotton and the cotton-gin, silk and silk-worms, flax and linen, leather, rubber, cattle and cattle raising, etc., in their enthusiastic pursuit of knowledge on this subject.

The young people in a Church School worked for weeks writing, preparing for, and rehearsing an original biblical pageant. It involved a considerable amount of research as to the facts of the narrative and the customs, costumes, etc., of Bible days, in order to make the presentation as realistic as possible. It was done voluntarily and, although study and hard work were involved, the participants thoroughly enjoyed it from start to finish.

In time past there has been considerable controversy in educational circles between the advocates of "interest" as the keynote of education, and the supporters of "effort" as the essential factor. The former accused the latter of neglecting the most powerful motive in learning; the latter accused the former of "soft" pedagogy and attempting to sugar-coat study. Both were right and both wrong. Both interest and effort are needful in education; but the harmonizing of the two is found in the conception of *purpose* as the source of interest and the motive for effort.

(3) *Coöperation for the attainment of a common objective leads to socialized purposes, attitudes, and relationships in life.*

In the last analysis, the highest purpose of education is not to impart knowledge or develop skill in dealing with material things. These, of course, are essential, but the highest function of the school is performed when it cultivates right human relationships, when it leads to the adoption of social (as contrasted with purely individual and selfish) purposes in life, the cultivation of social (*i.e.,* friendly, helpful, coöperative) attitudes in all the relationships of life.

This can be accomplished not merely by lecturing or instruction or exhortation, but by the simple process of leading

pupils into the experience of habitually working together for a common and social purpose. The "socialized recitation" of the modern school is replacing the old-fashioned competitive attitude in which the failure of one pupil meant the success of another, and the interest of each was automatically set in opposition to the interest of all others. Such a type of recitation and such an atmosphere in the schoolroom throughout the formative years led naturally to a highly competitive and selfish civilization, in which the object of each one is to seek his own advantage regardless of the cost to others. Cut-throat competition and class war are a natural result of the older type of training. Train up a child in the way of competition and when he is old he will not depart from it; but train up a child in the spirit of coöperation and when he is old he will not depart from that. The solution of the industrial and economic problems of America will be found, in part, through the substitution of the coöperative project for the competitive recitation in all schools. A fuller discussion of this will be given in a following chapter, dealing with the "social project" principle as an expression of the educational process which we have here considered.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Dewey, *Democracy and Education.*
Dewey, *The School and Society.*
Dewey, *How We Think.*
Kilpatrick, *Education for a Changing Civilization.*
Thorndike and Gates, *Elementary Principles of Education.*
Horne, *This New Education.*
Stevenson, *The Project Method of Teaching.*
Shaver, *The Project Principle in Religious Education.*

CHAPTER THREE

Modern Religious Education

While many fundamental changes have taken place in general education during the past few decades, parallel developments in the field of religious education have been perhaps even more significant. The inherent conservatism of religion has delayed the general adoption of changes long known to be necessary, but in the past few years progress has been very rapid.

In the preceding chapters we have described briefly the basic principles underlying the modern conception of the purpose and process of education and have sketched the steps by which this conception was developed from earlier ideals. We turn now to the special field of religious education, where we find that a similar revolution is taking place. To describe, evaluate, and promote what is best in the fundamental principles of this movement, popularly known as "the new religious education" is the central purpose of this book.

This movement is in its initial stages only. There has been some experimentation and much criticism, but little general understanding of its full significance. When its philosophy has been formulated, its excrescences removed, and its principles generally understood throughout the Church, it will be recognized as one of the greatest forward steps ever taken in the field of religious education. For many it will involve a radical change in their conception of the purpose and factors of religious education; while to many others who have come to realize the tragic ineffectiveness of our present methods, it will bring renewed hope of relating the youth of today to the

faith and life of the Church. A general statement of the fundamental concepts of this movement is all that will be attempted in this chapter; their elaboration will follow in succeeding chapters.

I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

(1) *The Sunday School Movement.*

Modern religious education is a resultant of three historical forces, the first of which naturally is the Sunday School Movement as known to the past and passing generations, we would not underrate the value of this. Indeed, it would not be easy to exaggerate the influence of the Sunday School in American life during the past century or so. It has provided the elements of religious knowledge, helped overcome the criminal neglect of religion in the average home, balanced the overemphasis upon adult life prevalent throughout the Church, and provided a large and inspiring field of service for hundreds of thousands of lay men and women.

But it has done this in spite of many and manifest defects—insufficient time, poor equipment, untrained teachers, unsuitable lessons, and (most fundamental of all) an inadequate conception of its own objective and technique. In the average Sunday School class of the conventional type, above the primary department, the teacher questions or lectures to the pupils, seeking to impart to them a knowledge of the lesson (usually a Bible passage or a portion from the Church catechism) assigned for that day. The pupils may or may not have "studied" the lesson sufficiently to give the proper answers to the routine questions; if they do, the teacher is well pleased and considers her work a success. Too often she fails to ask herself the question, "Do they really understand this? Does it interest them? Are they conscious of any relationship between this lesson and their own life problems day by day? Have I led them to want to apply the truths of this lesson to any real problems of their own? What have they done, or will they do, as a result of this lesson? What changes in character, disposition, and conduct have

been brought about as the result of my teaching during the past month or year?"

The average teacher regards her task as essentially one of instruction, of imparting knowledge; and if the pupil is able to reproduce the words of a lesson, little thought is given to whether he has really assimilated its meaning and is impelled to become a doer of the word and not a hearer only.

In brief, current Sunday School practice to a large extent identifies education with instruction and knowledge with memory. The lessons do not correspond to any felt need on the part of the pupils and consequently are listened to with little interest and quickly forgotten—like the boy who was asked whether he took Latin in college and replied, "I was exposed to it but I didn't take it."

It should not be forgotten, however, that side by side with the inefficiency of the average Sunday School there is a steadily growing body of progressive educational thought among Sunday School workers, which has already displaced the purely catechetical method of earlier days with the Christian Nurture and other systems in our own Church and brought about the change from the Uniform to the International Graded Lessons and similar courses in most Protestant denominations. At the present time this sentiment is finding expression in a joint curriculum enterprise under the auspices of the International Council of Religious Education, which has promise of bringing about an entire reconstruction of the traditional Sunday School curriculum.

Another symptom of dissatisfaction with existing conditions in recent years has been the development of young people's societies and other auxiliary organizations, and the widespread popularity of the Boy Scout movement as a non-sectarian program of general development with a moral and religious background. These organizations are alike in emphasizing initiative, self-expression, and self-activity on the part of the young people, and in providing programs whose educational elements consist chiefly not in direct instruction but in coöperative activi-

ties—learning by doing, growing through serving. The chief significance of these movements is that they reveal the serious educational defects in the existing Sunday School organization and curriculum.

These three elements, average Sunday School practice, progressive Sunday School thought, and auxiliary young people's organizations, together constitute the first factor in the historical background of the new conception of religious education.

(2) *Modern Educational Ideals.*

A second factor in the changing conception of religious education is to be found in the rapid and widespread development of thought in general education, due largely to the writings of John Dewey and his followers. This movement was summarized briefly in chapter two. Again we call attention to the manifest defects of Dewey's philosophy, educationally as well as religiously, and the necessity of discrimination between his prophetic vision of education as progressive social adjustment and efficiency, and his unscientific omission of the most important factor (*i.e.,* the divine) in our social environment. The greatness of his contribution but calls attention to the seriousness of the omission.

Even as it is, through his influence upon public school practice and through his interpreters in the field of religious education, Professor Dewey has been profoundly influential in bringing about the changed viewpoint in religious education. Particularly is this true of the new understanding of the learning process, replacing the old Herbartian technique, and the consequent new conception of the curriculum as a series of guided experiences in Christian living.

(3) *The method of the Master.*

Finally, the determining factor in bringing about the general adoption of the new type of religious education will be, we believe, the recognition of the fact that it is essentially the method used by our Lord Himself. Religion is characteristically

conservative and when a new method is proposed the first and easiest objection to it is to say, "This is not the method the Church has always used." But if we can show (as we undoubtedly can in this case) that the supposed new method is in effect a return to the essentials embodied in the teaching technique of our Lord Himself, there is no further force in this objection.

II. FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTIONS

In discussing educational programs it has been customary to distinguish between objective, curriculum, method, and organization (or administration), each of these being quite distinct from the others. For example, the *objective* of a given lesson might be to develop the attitude and habit of helpfulness toward others. The lesson, *i.e.,* the portion of the *curriculum* for that day, would be the story of the Little Captive Maid (II Kings 5) helping her master to find a cure for his leprosy. The *method* would be the telling of the story by the teacher; and the *organization* would be a class in which the pupils receive the instruction or listen to the story by the teacher.

The same objective—helpfulness—might be attempted in the new way by having the class together engage in an enterprise of helpful service, such as, for example, making a scrapbook to be sent to a sick child or to the mission field. The story of the Little Captive Maid might be included in the scrapbook, and the story could be told as a part of the lesson; but the central thing would be the experience of preparing and giving this scrapbook as a deed of helpfulness, in which the class would function as a group of little friends with an older helper, working together to help someone else—and also helping one another in the preparation of the papers. Thus, objective, lesson, method, and organization would be all one and could be separated only in thought.

But while in practice the four concepts—objective, curriculum, method, and organization—are closely related, still it

is helpful to our understanding of the process to separate the four and to consider what is meant by each of these in the new religious education.

(1) *The Objective: Christian Personality.*

Perhaps the best way to get at this would be to set side by side two definitions of the objective of religious education, one representing the older and the other representing the newer viewpoint.

(Older): *The objective of religious education is to impart to the pupil a knowledge of our Christian faith and duty, confident that the knowledge of these two will lead to life in accordance therewith. The process is essentially one of instruction and is predominantly intellectual in character, although it may be supplemented by exhortation or by the addition of supposedly related expressional activities.*

(Newer): *The objective of religious education is the development of Christian personality through guided practice in Christian living (including, work, study, play, service, and worship). Knowledge is acquired as needed for present or future guidance or in response to a vital interest.*

It is not meant to imply by this comparison that the older viewpoint did not aim at the achievement of Christian character on the part of the pupil. Undoubtedly thoughtful and conscientious teachers have always looked upon this as the ultimate goal of their endeavors. But it was looked upon as an ultimate rather than an immediate objective. The immediate objective for which the teacher was directly responsible was the impartation of religious truth. The ultimate objective, it was assumed, would follow as a natural consequence of the attainment of the immediate objective; but the teacher was not responsible for this.

Consequently, in practice the teacher tended to feel that if he was successful in imparting a knowledge of religious truth his duty had been performed and his responsibility was ended; whereas the newer conception, on the other hand, aims directly

at practice in Christian living, in which study, worship, service, etc., each plays a part. There is no intermediate step between effort and attainment; and the teacher therefore has no opportunity to rest satisfied with any attainment short of his real goal.

(2) *The Method: Experience under guidance.*

The second basic concept in the new religious education is its conception of *method.* It is customary to list and classify various methods such as the lecture method, the question method, the story method, the discussion method, etc. In the new religious education, while all of these have their place, the fundamental and inclusive method is "experience under guidance." Instead of merely expounding a Scripture passage on helpfulness, or questioning those who are supposed to have studied it, or telling a story about it, the basic method is to engage as a group in a project of helpfulness, in actually doing a helpful deed, in the course of which Bible verses, examples of helpfulness from other sources, class discussion, etc., will all have their place but this place will be supplemental and interpretative rather than central.

This conception of method is based on the principle that "we learn by doing," *i.e.,* we gain skill by practice, we acquire knowledge when it is needed for a definite self-chosen purpose and used in the accomplishment of that purpose, we develop character traits by choosing and acting in the desired direction, we cultivate attitudes and relationships (such as worship, fellowship, friendliness, etc.) by repeatedly experiencing them. All else is supplemental to this basic process.

Consequently, the characteristic method in religious education is to guide the pupil into the experience of the desired feeling, the choosing of the desired type of conduct, the seeking and using of knowledge in purposive activities, and the practice of the desired skills for the better accomplishment of chosen projects. The function of the teacher is to guide the pupils in these experiences.

(3) *The Curriculum: A series of planned experiences.*

The older usage of the term "curriculum" was to designate the course of lessons which were week by week to be studied by the pupil and taught by the teacher. But when we came to conceive of education as something more than instruction, as including not only knowledge but also attitudes, appreciations, skills, habits, and indeed all modifications of character and conduct through experience—then we came to see that our occupations, recreations, friendships, and indeed all relationships of life, are just as likely to influence and change us as our school studies.

The way in which the worship service of the Church School is conducted, whether as a vital religious experience or as an empty formality, will distinctly influence the child's habits of worship and devotion. The personality of the teacher will affect the characters of the pupils. The way in which a member of the baseball team plays, whether fairly and for the love of the sport or unfairly and with the sole purpose of winning, will both reveal and influence his character. Our social relationships with others react upon our own personalities, and the participation of the group in an enterprise of unselfish personal service for others will be a forceful factor in developing the spirit of Christian service.

Consequently, we now use the term "curriculum" to designate the planned activities of the school (including study, worship, service, recreation and fellowship) through which it is sought to influence the character of the pupils toward the desired ideal. In other words, "the curriculum is the sum total of the experiences through which we endeavor to attain the objective."

And it is clear that when stripped of their accidental trappings of time and place, the basic ideas and general methods characteristic of the "new religious education" are none other than those exemplified by Jesus of Nazareth, the Master Teacher. We cannot do better here than to quote a paragraph from Professor W. Clayton Bower, whose recent book,

Religious Education in the Modern Church, is fundamental to any understanding of this movement:

"As a teacher the gospels show Jesus to have possessed consummate skill. A careful study of his method discloses, lying close beneath the surface of his technique, a body of consistent educational assumptions. On occasion, some of these more basic assumptions became explicit, as when he suggested that the way to adequate and clear understanding was through overt, responsible, purposive activity. It is little less than astonishing to discover how closely the technique of Jesus anticipated the best theory and practice of modern education. His placing of the supreme emphasis upon personality, his insistence upon the central position of the growing person in the educative process, his basing his teaching upon the concrete and present experience of the learner, his insistence upon the issue of knowledge in the practical conduct of life, his organization of the school as an informal society of persons sharing a common experience, his basic assumption that we learn by doing, his admission of his disciples to responsible participation in his own work—these are almost precisely the focal points around which modern educational technique is in process of being reconstructed." (W. C. Bower, *Religious Education in the Modern Church,* p. 6.)

(4) *Organization: Pupil participation in purposing and planning group experiences.*

Two characteristics will mark the administrative organization of a school or class under the new plan:

(a) It will be more informal and flexible than heretofore. The number of pupils in a class, whether boys and girls should be in separate classes or in the same class, the age limits of the class—all of these will be determined from time to time in the light of the curriculum planned, *i.e.,* the particular experience or series of experiences through which they are to be led.

(b) It will be more democratic. We are educating citizens for a democracy and they must ever be trained from almost the earliest years to assume *some* measure of responsibility for social self-determination. In the younger classes this will naturally be very limited, but the degree to which they can be entrusted with the responsibility for self-government and for participation in the administrative plans of the school will in-

crease rapidly with the passing years. In the class, in the department, and in the school, the pupils should be taken into consultation so far as practicable in the adoption of plans and policies. The primary characteristic of a true project in religious education is that it shall be either initiated or voluntarily and wholeheartedly accepted by the group by which it is to be carried out.

All of these matters, the objective, the method, the curriculum, and the organization—will be considered more fully in succeeding chapters. The foregoing statements are intended as introductory only.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Soares, *Religious Education.*
Bower, *Religious Education in the Modern Church.*
Bower, *Character Through Creative Experience.*
Vieth, *Teaching for Christian Living.*
Vieth, *Objectives in Religious Education.*
Coe, *A Social Theory of Religious Education.*
Coe, *What is Christian Education?*
Myers, *Teaching Religion.*
Carrier, *How Shall I Learn to Teach Religion?*
Cooper, *The Teacher's Adjustment to the New Religious Education* (Booklet).
Suter, *Next Steps in Religious Education.*
Suter, *Open Doors in Religious Education.*
Suter, *Creative Teaching.*
Squires, *Educational Movements of Today.*
Howlett, *Religion the Dynamic of Education.*
Shaver, *The Project Principle in Religious Education.*
Shaver, *Present-day Trends in Religious Education.*
Danielson and Perkins, *Teaching Without Textbooks.*
Munro, *The Church as a School.*
Munro, *The Pastor and Religious Education.*
Munro, *The Director of Religious Education.*
Betts and Hawthorne, *Method in Teaching Religion.*
Betts, *How to Teach Religion.*
Betts, *The New Program of Religious Education.*
Shackford, *Teaching the Christian Religion.*

CHAPTER FOUR

Objectives in Religious Education

The first thing to do in starting on a journey is to decide upon the destination, to determine the objective. So likewise in our educational journey; before we consider organization, curriculum, or method, we must first fix clearly in our minds the objective of religious education. In the foregoing chapter we have stated it summarily as "Christian character," or more fully, "efficient Christian personality." But this is entirely too general to answer our purpose here. It must be amplified in order to be intelligible and the purpose of this chapter is to state this objective somewhat more fully and with some interpretative details.

I. THE PLACE OF OBJECTIVES

The purpose of objectives in education is threefold:

(1) *To give direction to effort.* Too often our Church School teachers carry on their work as a matter of routine. They teach because they have been asked to teach, and they teach what they have been told to teach, with little real understanding of what they are doing and no adequate vision of its ultimate purpose. No wonder they grow tired; no wonder it is difficult to enlist teachers, for "where there is no vision the people perish."

As the sculptor sees in the rough marble the angel that is to be and is inspired to patient daily toil while he seeks to realize the vision, so the Church School teacher may envision to himself the ultimate objective of his work in human souls, and for the joy that is set before him endure the disappointments and seeming failures of his weekly task.

Too much of our teaching is aimless; we teach certain lessons and certain subjects because we always have done so, because they are "good," and therefore presumably will be good for the pupils.

There is an old story of a traveler who passed by and saw three stonemasons at work side by side. He asked them, "What are you doing here?" The first replied: "I am making five dollars a day," for his vision was limited to his own gain from the daily drudgery. The second replied: "I am earning a living for my wife and children," for his vision was higher and he saw his toil in terms of what it meant to others who were near and dear to him. But the third replied: "I am building a cathedral for Almighty God," for his vision was higher still and he interpreted his life and labor in terms of its eternal significance.

A study of the objectives of religious education helps us to see the cathedral that we are to build and to realize that we are building it.

(2) *To guide in the selection of materials.* The universal tendency today is toward greater flexibility in the curriculum, with a similarly increasing richness of available material. The day of standardized series of lesson courses, used in all schools under all circumstances, is rapidly passing and is not likely to return. Every year witnesses the issuance of optional courses for various grades by various publishers. More and more our rectors, directors of religious education, and other Church School leaders are accepting their responsibility for local curriculum building, determining their own special needs upon the basis of recognized objectives as related to the interests, characteristics, and problems of the pupils in their particular Church and community.

All of this makes it increasingly necessary that workers in religious education have a very clear and definite comprehension of their objective, so as to choose wisely from the wealth of available material. Even where the courses and lessons are

rigidly fixed, the teacher has a considerable range of choice in the use of illustrations, expressional activities, etc.

(3) *To determine the progress made.* Until recently it was customary to measure the efficiency of Church Schools in terms of a fixed standard of organization, enrollment, and method. This practice will doubtless always have its value, as a promotional device for generally recognized norms in the mechanical details of our work. But increasingly we are coming to realize that the only real test of efficiency in religious education is the results in the lives of the pupils. We are therefore coming to measure our Church Schools more in terms of the conduct achievement of the pupils—in other words, in what way and to what extent are we actually influencing the character and conduct of our pupils? The teacher who is satisfied if her class has a high average of attendance (perhaps because of a prize offered by the superintendent) or who feels that her task is accomplished if her pupils have perfectly memorized the Church catechism or can repeat without error the memory verses of the quarter or the year, is out of place in a modern Church School. Regular attendance is to be desired and memory has its place—but the real test of our educational efficiency is stated in broader terms and deals with more fundamental qualities. Educational efficiency is judged by progress toward our educational goal, *i.e.,* our objective; but we cannot do this until we first determine our objective.

II. GENERAL AND SPECIAL OBJECTIVES

In the educational world two kinds of objectives are recognized—general and special.

(1) *A general objective defines the purpose of the educational process as a whole.* It is therefore never fully attained; as Browning said, "A man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?" For example, if we take as one of our general objectives, "Christ-like character and conduct," it is evident that this represents an ideal, an ultimate goal

which can never be completely attained in this world but toward which we can all make progress.

We may say therefore that the function of the general objective is to inspire us with "the vision glorious" and at the same time to serve as the basis for the formulation of specific objectives which are more definite, more immediate, and more attainable goals.

(2) *A specific objective defines the purpose of a subdivision of the educational process*—for example, a course or lesson or unit of work.

Naturally, the specific objective must be based upon the general objective and constitute a step toward its attainment. Each course of lessons and each unit within the course should have a definite and specific aim which constitutes the objective for that specific unit, and it is these with which the teacher will deal week by week. At the same time, it is important to relate all these to the ultimate goal or general objective.

For example, a general objective might be the development of the spirit and habit of worship—and a specific objective contributory to that could be "an appreciation of the meaning and significance of the Holy Communion."

(3) *Both general and specific objectives are needed.* This is sufficiently evident from what has been said above. The general objective is the destination; the specific objectives are the road map. And one of our great needs at present is to agree upon a statement of general objectives and then on that basis to work out in detail a statement of the specific objectives for the guidance of those who are to use it in the teaching of their classes.

It is of course beyond the scope of this book to propose a series of specific objectives. All that will be attempted here is to suggest a tentative statement of the general objectives in religious education, for criticism and modification in the light of wider experience.

III. GENERAL OBJECTIVES IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The objectives of religious education in the individual are:

(1) *Conscious relationship to God in Christ.* Let us understand once for all that the *basic* thing in religion (and consequently in religious education) is relationship to God—not a belief about God, although this is important; not ethical conduct or "devotion to the highest social ideals," although Matthew Arnold defined religion as "morality touched with emotion" and the prophets of modern humanism define religion in terms of human relationships. If there is any lesson which history teaches beyond the possibility of mistake it is that the basis of religion in all its higher forms is essentially a personal relationship to God; and in the Christian religion we find this personal relationship mediated through the Holy Spirit, attained in the Church as the Body of Christ, and expressed in the fellowship of the faithful which we call "the communion of the saints." As St. Augustine said, "Thou hast made us for Thyself and our heart is restless until it rests in Thee." Granted that the "personality" of God is in a sense a metaphor, that it represents but imperfectly a truth beyond the power of human minds to comprehend or human words to express, it is still the best expression we have, the least inadequate of any way of conceiving God. It is a far truer picture than a blind cosmic force or an unrelated metaphysical Absolute.

And if we accept a personal God as the basic fact of the universe and relationship to this personal God as the fundamental element in religion, it follows that the primary task of religious education is to develop this relationship, to bring it out into consciousness, to interpret and enrich it, to foster it through all the experiences of life. In a sense, all the rest of religion and all the other objectives of religious education flow out of this.

However one may conceive this relationship to be established —whether at birth or by conversion or in the sacrament of Holy Baptism—it still remains necessary to develop it, to

realize our potentialities in this direction, to nourish and foster the divine life within us; and this is the task of religious education in its broadest sense. The unconscious should be made conscious, the implicit should become explicit.

Perhaps the most fundamental and widespread defect in our religious life today is the lack of a God-consciousness. We treat Him as an intellectual hypothesis instead of as a living Person. The "practice of the presence of God" must be based upon a *realization* of the presence of God; and the consciousness of our present general failure in this respect is in part responsible for the notable growth of interest in mysticism, which may be regarded as an extreme form of the immediate intuition of the presence of God. As usual, a defect produces by reaction an excess; and we must seek to foster in the coming generation a normal, healthy realization of our relationship to God and of His presence in our lives. And to the Christian this revelation of a conscious relationship to God must come in and through our Lord Jesus Christ. It is true but not adequate to say that God was "revealed" in Christ. He is also revealed in part by storm and earthquake, by human history, by the "flower in the crannied wall' of which Tennyson speaks. *God* was in Christ—not merely a manifestation or revelation of God. Any interpretation of Christ which falls short of a full acceptance of His essential deity will in the long run prove inadequate to sustain a full and vital Christian life.

The conviction of the reality of God, the consciousness of His presence and power in our lives, cannot be taught by a merely intellectual process but must also be absorbed through the "unconscious tuition" of the home, the influence of personality, atmosphere, and environment. If God is a present reality to parents and teachers, He will become so to the child. Ease and naturalness in speaking of God, the presence of religious pictures and objects in the home, as well as in the Church School, will help.

(2) *Understanding and appreciation of the personality, life, and teachings of Jesus Christ.*

The Christian religion is an historic religion. It is based upon certain historic facts, chiefly those centering in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, His life and teaching. Knowledge of the chief facts of His life as recorded in the Gospels and a general knowledge of His teachings, especially in their application to present-day problems, are obviously an essential element in Christian religious education. In this task we are to some extent handicapped by the fact that the story comes to us in four different versions, three of which (the Synoptic Gospels) are to a considerable degree parallel but differ (by inclusion or omission) at many points; while the fourth makes an entirely different approach. Consequently, as we all know, very few ever get a clear and unified impression of the Gospel story. To overcome this, it is suggested that in courses dealing with the life of Christ we make use occasionally of the "interwoven Gospels" in which the various Gospel versions are combined in one connected story, omitting duplicates and variants. An example is *The Shorter Bible—New Testament* by Professor Kent (published by Charles Scribner's Sons).

We are also handicapped by the fact that our ordinary translations (both the King James version of 1611 and the American Standard Revised Version of 1901) are cast in language which, while unsurpassed for dignity and nobility of style, is not the language of everyday life. Consequently, the *exclusive* use of these noble versions as the source of our knowledge of the life and teachings of our Lord has an inevitable tendency to give to the young person of today the impression that religion belongs to another world and that the teachings of our Lord are as archaic as the literary form in which our version of them is cast. We would therefore suggest that for at least part of our study and teaching about Christ we use some of the excellent new translations of the New Testament into modern speech—Moffatt, Goodspeed, Weymouth, and others.

In addition to a knowledge of the life and teachings of our

Lord, it is necessary also to develop some appreciation of the significance of His Person. It is very popular in some circles today to define the Christian religion in terms of the life and teachings of Jesus and to speak of it as "the Jesus way of living," laying chief emphasis upon the acceptance of His character as our ideal of moral perfection and the endeavor to live in accordance with His example. With this goes a tendency to discount the value of "metaphysical theories" as to His divine nature or the importance of the definite affirmations of the Christian creed. The moral perfection of Jesus is boldly asserted, but the endeavor to form any conception of His nature which would afford a logical basis for belief in His sinlessness is viewed with suspicion. It is intimated that the only intelligible meaning of the belief in the divinity of Christ is that "God is like Jesus."

We submit that this is as inconsistent logically as it is unsatisfactory theologically. For that matter, the fragmentary records of the life and teachings of Jesus given in our Gospels (covering not over three years of His active life and about six or eight hours of steady discourse) are *in themselves* insufficient data from which to draw such a sweeping generalization as that He was absolutely sinless or morally perfect, unless it is coupled with a belief in His essential deity. To accept the "Jesus way of living" as an authoritative standard, if we believe in a merely human Jesus, has no more religious significance than the taking of any other great teacher as our standard. To attribute to Jesus of Nazareth, on the evidence of the imperfect and fragmentary records of His life and teachings preserved in the New Testament, an absolute and unlimited authority over our consciences, is a step which we have no logical or moral right to take unless it is based upon a belief in His essential deity.

We would therefore say with emphasis that we are not to be content with developing in our pupils a knowledge and appreciation of the life and teachings of Jesus from a purely biographical and ethical standpoint. We should accompany this

teaching by a definite and purposeful effort to lead them into an understanding and acceptance of the Christian belief as to His Person. Whether or not one attributes finality to the historic creeds of the Christian faith, they at least represent the most serious and most nearly adequate effort yet made to explain the facts of His life and teaching. Religious education must transmit the best that has been achieved in the past, if it would help the future to become truly and adequately creative.

One of the very real dangers of present-day religious education is that it will concentrate too exclusively on ethical conduct and devotional experiences, to the neglect of systematic knowledge. The instrumental function of thought as a means of carrying through present undertakings is sometimes stressed to the comparative neglect of its representative and reflective functions in developing systematized knowledge and general truths. Habits of conduct which are the product merely of utilizing the instincts and conditioning the responses are on a plane but little higher than the training of animals. The formation of clear and definite ideas on at least the fundamental concepts of religion is a necessary and important aim in education.

(3) *Christ-like character and conduct.*

We use both words, "character" and "conduct," to make clear that we refer both to the abiding inner disposition and to the outward habits of action. Frequently either word is used to include both aspects, and if this is understood, it is well. But both concepts must be included in our objective.

The accomplishment of this objective will usually involve three factors:

(1) A knowledge of the life and teachings of Christ.

(2) Practice in translating these events and sayings from their Oriental setting and contemporary environment (both social and intellectual) into permanent principles of universal validity, and applying these to our own problems, opportunities, and temptations. This affords abundant opportunity for group discussion and problem thinking.

(3) Experience in situations where there is a choice between the life demanded by this standard and that of some lower standard, with guidance in choosing and acting upon the higher standard. We form the habit of choosing "the hard right against the easy wrong" by repeated practice in countless situations where this choice must be made. No amount of mere instruction in what is right can of itself lead the child to desire to do the right. And if the situation is complex, with many factors involved, there is increased opportunity for group coöperation in deliberative thought, thereby laying the foundation for group *mores* in action.

(4) *The purpose and ability to criticize intelligently and cooperate creatively in the task of Christianizing the world.*

We hasten to say that while "Christianizing the world" certainly includes foreign missions, it is not a mere synonym for that. We learned long ago that there is no real difference between "foreign" and "home" or "domestic" missions, and the distinction is retained purely as a matter of convenience in administration. We learned also that the most effective method of missionary work at home or abroad is religious education and that religious education should include the development of the missionary spirit and purpose from the earliest years—and that this is best done by leading the children in projects of helpfulness to others, both here and elsewhere.

We are learning also that one of the chief obstacles to the achievement of Christian character by the individual is the non-Christian world order in which he is immersed. Unless the teachings of Jesus can be applied to and practised in social, industrial, national, and racial relationships, it remains a question whether they can be rightly applied to the individual —for our daily life is wrapped up in and conditioned by these relationships. Too often the Church has been found on the side of the established order, a defender of that which is rather than a champion of that which ought to be. One reason for this is the fact that our traditional religious education has been planned almost wholly for the purpose of transmitting to the

next generation the beliefs and practices of the past and present generations, whereas it should aim also at preparing the coming generation to analyze its own problems and work out its own solutions in its own way, using the experience of the past but not being tied down to it.

One object in religious education therefore should be to inspire and equip the pupil to criticize intelligently the Church and the social order of today with the aim of contributing constructively to the building of a better civilization and a more perfect Church tomorrow. The temptation of too much of our religious education in the past has been to seek to maintain unchanged the beliefs, standards, and practices of the past—in other words, to apply in religious education the policy which, until recently, the Chinese applied in general education, resulting in maintaining the *status quo* for some 3,000 years.

We hold on the contrary that truly efficient religious education should lead the pupils adequately to appreciate the past, intelligently to criticize the present, and wisely to shape the future. A passion for social justice at home and a spirit of world-friendship (both politically and religiously) for other nations should be the hallmark of the educated Christian. The missionary education of children as well as the missionary work of the Church should be carried on in the spirit of sympathetic appreciation of others, together with a desire to share with them that which means most to us—rather than in an attitude of pitying condescension. The training for social reconstruction may begin with helping less fortunate children but should quickly lead on to a study of the causes operating to produce economic maladjustment, and the relation of these to the principles of the Christian religion.

(5) *A Christian philosophy of life.*

One reason why materialistic science and agnostic philosophy make inroads upon the Christian faith of young people is because the Church has failed to lead them to form their own Christian philosophy of life. Their minds are like the "house

empty and garnished," passively receptive to any supposedly new idea that comes along. As someone has said, "When a new idea gets into an empty head it has the time of its life."

The Church through the work of religious education has a sacred responsibility for leading young people to form such a conception of the relation of God to the physical world as will enable them to receive all established conclusions of science, without being afraid of any "conflict between religion and science"; and also to meet the problem of sin and suffering in the world with a steady faith in God and the ultimate victory of His cause.

(6) *Full participation in the life of the Christian Church, its services, sacraments, fellowship, teachings, and purposes.*

On the human side the basic process in religious education is participation in the life of the Christian community, in and through which the Holy Spirit "worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure." The child first does, then understands what he has done. The religious education of Hebrew children through the annual Passover and other religious festivals is a picture of an educational ideal. It proceeded through shared experience in the religious life of the family and community, in which the child participated from earliest years. The meanings of the various observances were explained to him from time to time as he was able to appropriate them, but the basic educational process was vital and social, rather than intellectual.

There is, however, a correlative obligation upon the Church to make its services and other activities as intelligible as possible to the child, in some cases perhaps through age-group organization and programs, and in other cases through modification and simplification of the present adult program. The child has at least as much right as the adult to be considered in determining the content of the Church service, but too often this fact has been ignored and this right denied by the framers of our services.

Again, we are convinced of the educational value of sacraments. Unless we wish to reduce our religion to a coldly intellectual philosophy and ethic, there must be a place in it for the sense of mystery, for the experience of awe in the presence of that which is above and beyond our comprehension.

The experience of fellowship in the Church, the "Christian brotherhood," which was so strong a factor in the early Church and is now so potent in certain special groups or movements in the Church, presents a problem. On the one hand we should seek to make this distinctive Christian fellowship a very real and vital thing. It meets a real need of human nature (as is evidenced by the way in which men in default of it will turn to various secret societies, fraternities, etc.). And yet we do not wish to cultivate an exclusive or superior attitude toward the rest of the world, toward those who are not of our fellowship. The interrelation and adjustment of these two needs will constitute one of the educational problems in administration.

(7) *Assimilation of the best religious experience of the race, especially as recorded in the Christian Scriptures.*

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament have always been recognized by the Christian Church as the chief source book for religious education, and have even at times been exalted to a practically exclusive place. Seven brief statements may be made in connection with this objective:

(1) Both Old Testament and New Testament are to be included, but the preparatory and imperfect revelation given in the former is to be interpreted in the light of the latter. Our Lord clearly indicated this fact in His treatment of divorce, revenge, the Sabbath, ceremonial regulations, etc. As St. Augustine said, "He who places the Old Testament upon the same level as the New, wrongs the New." In religious education therefore the Old Testament is to be used selectively and where its standards are at variance with Christian standards this fact is to be frankly stated and explained.

(2) Literary and historical questions about the Scriptures,

when they arise, are to be treated in the light of the best biblical science of today, with no attempt to evade difficulties.

(3) Care should be taken that nothing is taught as literal fact which will later have to be unlearned. With little children it is not necessary at first to make any distinction between story and history, but when a distinction is called for it should be made honestly; and the necessity for this should be anticipated and prepared for.

(4) In religious education the Old Testament is to be treated as a source book, as a record of the religious experiences of the Hebrew people recorded by their prophets and others, through which experiences God was ever revealing Himself to them. What was revelation on God's side was discovery on man's side, but it was one process.

(5) There should also be some study of the Bible as a literary whole and in its historical development. Our young people will naturally want to know something of its origin, history, and development throughout the centuries, and of the relation and respective limitations of the divine and the human factors within it.

(6) In addition to the Bible we have as a part of our religious heritage the stories of the saints, and the religious music, art, and architecture of the Christian Church throughout the ages. These should not be neglected.

(7) For older students there should also be acquired some familiarity with the sacred scriptures of other religions, at least enough to give a general comprehension and sympathetic appreciation of these.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Vieth, *Objectives in Religious Education.*
Vieth, *The Development of a Curriculum of Religious Education.*
Charters, *The Teaching of Ideals.*
Fiske, *Purpose in Teaching Religion.*

CHAPTER FIVE

The Process of Religious Education — "Experience Under Guidance"

We come now to the process or method by which religious education as here conceived is to be carried on. The term "process" is preferred to "method" as being the more inclusive. "Method" is sharply distinguished from "content" but "process" refers both to content and method. And since in the new religious education (as will be seen below) content and method are but two aspects of the same unitary process, it is desirable to use the term which suggests this fact. The curriculum of experiences (of worship, study, play, service, etc.) through which the pupils are led, includes both the content and the method of religious education and we speak of the two together as the "process" of religious education.

We can best approach this by recalling our definitions of the purpose and the curriculum of religious education.

I. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

I. *The purpose of religious education is to help and guide the pupil in developing an efficient Christian personality.*

Not the impartation of knowledge nor the inculcation of doctrine *per se* is the objective of religious education, but the fostering of a conscious relation to God in Christ, the development of Christian purposes, ideals, attitudes, relationships, and habits, intelligently determined and efficiently functioning in life. Therefore, anything and everything which affects the character of the pupil in this direction is potentially a part of the curriculum of religious education. And while knowledge gained through the study of text books is one such

influence, we all know that there are many influences in life which affect us more powerfully than books studied in the school—whether that school be secular or religious. Therefore—

II. *The curriculum of religious education includes all experiences of the pupil planned and organized for the accomplishment of this purpose.*

In other words, the "curriculum" includes not only study as we have heretofore assumed, but also worship, play, service, giving, pageantry and dramatics, discussion, research, etc. It does this for the obvious reason that all these influence the pupil's life and character, which is the purpose of religious education, and therefore, as they are used for that purpose, they are a part of the curriculum.

Thus the curriculum becomes not a collection of text books but a series of experiences, planned and directed for a definite educational purpose, through which the pupils pass, under the guidance of the teacher. In other words, it is "experience under guidance."

From this it will be seen that the first effect of the new conception of the curriculum is to enlarge its scope. The familiar "lesson," consisting of the study of a text book or instruction by the teacher, remains; but we now realize that it is not the *sole* content of the curriculum. It is only one among several elements all of which may increase knowledge and do influence character. All of this follows necessarily from the basic assumption that the true purpose of education is not the increase of knowledge *per se,* but the development of character—to which development knowledge may contribute but other experiences also may contribute and are therefore to be considered equally with knowledge as elements in our educational curriculum.

A boy might memorize the Communion Service in the Prayer Book, for example, without any appreciable effect upon his character. But the reverent and worshipful attendance upon a service of the Holy Communion may influence him deeply.

The actual experience of worship is at least as educational as learning the forms of worship. This is not to disparage the importance of study and memorizing, but to call attention to the fact that there are other experiences which are as truly educational.

One boy through several weeks of instruction memorized the catechism and learned something of its meaning. Another boy, coming from an environment in which cheating, dishonesty, and profanity were taken as a matter of course, spent four weeks at a Boy Scout summer camp, where healthy outdoor sports, clean living, and clean speech, fair play, and good sportsmanship, discipline, and the daily "good turn," were taken as a matter of course. He very quickly sensed the difference and after a few slips adjusted himself to the new environment and accepted the new ideals and new code of conduct as the proper thing. Granted that the learning of the catechism through instruction and memorization is of educational value, is not the acquisition of new ideals and standards of conduct through example and practice also an educational process? If so, guided recreational activities are a legitimate part of the curriculum of religious education.

One Sunday School class studied three or four lessons on the missionary work of the Church in China. They learned the population and area of China, the names and locations of the mission stations, schools, and hospitals conducted by the Church in China. Another class of high school boys took as a class project teaching English to a group of Chinese boys at night school. They gave up the only free night they had each week in order to do this. They invited the Chinese boys to their class social and in return were taught by them some of the national Chinese games.

Assuming, optimistically, that the knowledge gained by the first class in their text book study of Chinese missions remains with them during the years to come, which is the more likely to affect favorably the attitude of the boys toward the Chinese —learning statistical facts about China, or practising human

helpfulness toward Chinese neighbors? Granting that the former should be included in our curriculum, is not the latter at least as likely to be of value in influencing character, and therefore equally entitled with the former to a place in our concept of the curriculum?

It is not necessary to multiply illustrations. We see at once that there are many things besides text book study which directly and powerfully influence character, and if the purpose of education is, as we have said, to influence character, then activities of these other types have a right to be counted as part of the educational curriculum.

No doubt every experience influences us to some extent, but for the sake of definiteness we include in our definition of the curriculum only those experiences which are specifically planned and organized for the purpose—in other words, "experience under guidance." And so we see that this process of "experience under guidance" is at once both the method and the content of religious education.

III. *An "experience" consists of a situation and a response.*

Professor Thorndike has enriched our educational philosophy by his analysis of the learning process into "situation and response" with the bond connecting them. For example, the child sees the figures "6 x 12= —." This is the "situation." He "responds," orally or in writing, "72." Or he hears the question "What did your sponsors then for you?" (situation), to which he replies: "They did promise and vow three things in my name," etc. (response). Or, he is present at a celebration of the Holy Communion, hearing the words of the priest as he utters the prayer of consecration, and seeing the beauty of the high altar, the stained glass windows, the Eucharistic vestments, the reverent postures of priest and people—all of which, together with his own past training, constitute a situation to which he responds with a feeling of reverent awe in the presence of the Holy Mysteries, and the desire more perfectly to serve and please Him in whose sacramental presence he stands.

Or a boy playing a match game sees a chance to cheat a little without being caught. This opportunity, together with the fact that it is the final game of the season, upon which the championship depends, and the fact that he knows his schoolmates would laugh at his scruples, constitute (in part) the situation. Will his past habits of rectitude and the memory of the teachings of parents and Church School teachers be sufficient to enable him to make the right response in this trying situation?

In actual fact, of course, the situations of life are never so simple as we have indicated in these illustrations. The factors in each situation are almost infinitely complex, including as they do every present fact and every past experience that may affect the reaction or response to the situation.

Likewise, in each situation there are usually many possible responses, and the question of interest to the educator is: Which of these possible responses will the boy choose to make? Educationally, our task is to help the pupil to analyze clearly the situation, consider and evaluate the possible responses, and choose the one which is right and best under the circumstances—the one which is most fully in accord with the spirit of Christ.

IV. *"Experience under guidance" (or, "the reconstruction of experience") means the interpretation and enrichment of selected situations with the evaluation and control of the responses made therein.*

The foregoing being the meaning of "experience" in the technical educational sense, it follows that "experience under guidance" implies the provision of certain selected and typical experiences, as a part of the curriculum, in which the teacher will help the pupils to do four things, namely:

(1) *Interpret the situation.* For example (to use the last illustration above), to ascertain just why and in what way it would be possible for the boy to win the game by unfair play, why we have rules in games, how important is the championship, whether it would be a real championship if won unfairly, how he would like to have others to do if they were in his

place, what would be the effect upon his own self-respect if he cheated, what others would think of him if it became generally known that he cheated, whether he is willing to do a thing secretly that he would be afraid to do if he knew it would be found out, whether there is any real difference in principle between a boy winning a game by cheating and a merchant gaining an extra dollar's profit by cheating in giving short measure, etc.

(2) *Enrich the situation.* The situation may be "enriched" by recalling examples of great men who have suffered loss of money or position or even life itself rather than violate their honor (for example, the story of Damon and Pythias, the Roman sentinel at the gates of Pompeii, Leonidas and his 300 Spartans at Thermopylae, the Charge of the Light Brigade). It may also be enriched by reference to literature (for example, Tennyson's poem, "The Charge of the Light Brigade"), poems expressing the ideal which it is sought to make determinative in a situation, Scripture verses, illustrative incidents, etc.

(3) *Evaluate the responses.* That is, consider the different responses that might possibly be made and measure each of them by the standards that have been accepted as determinative. For example, a boy at school sees another boy cheating on examination *(situation)*. He debates whether he should (a) report him to the teacher or the honor committee of the school, (b) speak to the boy and urge him to desist, (c) keep quiet and say nothing, (d) or follow his example so as to keep up with him in relative grades. For each of these possible responses, something might doubtless be said. The task of the teacher is to guide in analyzing the situation and then testing the different possible responses in view of their ultimate outcomes and their agreement or disagreement with the standards of Christ.

(4) *Control the response.* Having analyzed the factors in the situation and enriched the understanding of it through historical, literary, and Scriptural comparisons, and having listed and evaluated the various possible responses, the final step is

taken by leading the pupil to "control" his own response—that is, to determine his response in the light of the above considerations and not on the impulse of the moment. This is the fruition of the educational process in the given instance—the clear perception of what is right and the firm decision to act accordingly. It will be noted that the whole process culminates not in the acquisition of certain knowledge but in the intelligent and deliberate choice of Christian conduct expressing and strengthening Christian character. And yet (lest it be said that knowledge is neglected) it will be noticed that all along the pupil's knowledge is used and enlarged as he seeks a fuller understanding of the present situation. In this process, knowledge is sought for a definite purpose—and is therefore sought with interest and eagerness. It is immediately put to use and thereby fixed in the memory in the most effective way possible. But it is sought not for its own sake but because of its direct relation to a felt need—its instrumental value in meeting a given situation. And being used in this way it becomes a direct and immediate factor in building Christian character. Putting character first, knowledge is included. Well might the new educationalist say, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you."

II. EDUCATIONAL VALUES

The educational value of a group experience is determined by the degree to which it is characterized by:

1—Voluntary choice
2—Worthwhile objective
3—Typical character
4—Purposeful activity
5—Altruistic aim
6—Social coöperation
7—Deliberation over alternatives
8—Enrichment of knowledge
9—Psychological completeness
10—Evaluation of results

Perhaps the best way to get at this will be to take a typical experience and analyze it according to the above formula.

An experience in missionary education

Just before Lent something was said in the class about the Lenten offering for the missionary work of the Church. One of the older boys spoke up at once, "I don't see why we should give anything to send missionaries to China. They have a religion of their own that is five hundred years older than ours; they like it better and their government has practically said that they do not want us to teach Christianity to their children even in our missionary schools." Another said, "We don't want them to make Confucianists out of us, so why should we try to make Christians out of them?" A third boy added, "If we did make Christians out of them we would have to treat them as our equals in the Church and I don't want Sam Lee (the local laundryman) sending his children to our Sunday School." A fourth remarked, "The Chinese are naturally an inferior race and there's no use in our trying to make anything else out of them." To which another boy replied, "Don't you believe it—they were a highly civilized nation when your ancestors were barbarians in Europe."

After a moment's pause, the teacher said, "Apparently there is some difference of opinion as to the Chinese; one of you thinks there is no hope of making Christians out of them because their government is opposed to it, and another is afraid that our efforts would be so successful that our churches would be filled with Chinese members. Another thinks that as a race they are inherently lower than Anglo-Saxons, while still another reminds us that they attained civilization earlier and have kept it longer than we have. How would you like to appoint a committee or two to find out the real facts and report to the class? I will promise you that when they do we will follow the recommendations of the committee, if approved by the class."

The class voted unanimously in favor of the proposition. One

committee was appointed to study up and report on the history and achievements of the Chinese. Another was to find out about the various Chinese religions, their strong and weak points, and another to report on the present social, educational, and economic needs of China. The fourth committee was to investigate just what had been accomplished among the Chinese by the Christian missionaries and what work was now being carried on. Each committee was to prepare its reports in writing on standard size sheets, and the whole was to be bound in a loose-leaf binder entitled, "The Facts About China."

As they were high school boys they were able to find many references to source material themselves, but at several points the teacher suggested additional special material. Emphasis was laid on the fact that they were to make an absolutely unbiased study of the question and that the action of the class was to be based on their report. This gave them a feeling of responsibility and led them to take the task seriously—far more so than would have been the case if they had felt that no matter what they reported the teacher would determine the action of the class.

At the suggestion of one of the members it was decided also to beautify the book by the insertion of illustrative pictures—taken from *The Spirit of Missions, Asia, The National Geographic Magazine,* and other sources. A lighter touch which helped greatly to deepen the interest was a class expedition to Chinatown on a Saturday afternoon, in which they were shown Chinese curios, an obliging merchant demonstrating the use of the abacus, the brush and paint-pot in writing, a pair of chop-sticks in eating rice, etc. The expedition ended with a meal at a chop suey restaurant.

The project occupied four weeks. Without going into the details of their reports, the net result was to give them a much higher regard for the Chinese and a fuller appreciation of their contribution to civilization, while at the same time the defects of their religion and their culture were revealed. The class was led to look upon Christian missions, not as an attempt to im-

pose an alien religion upon them, but as an effort to help them to find in the Christian religion the needed supplement and completion of their own—in other words, an attitude of desire to share our best with them rather than a spirit of condemnation of that which they have.

Having arrived at this position through their own independent research and reflection the class felt honor bound to express it adequately in gifts and as a result the contribution from that class to the Easter offering was much larger than in previous years. The class voted that it was the most interesting and at the same time most truly educative experience that they had had in that Church School, and insisted that the four Sundays following be given to a very brief survey of four other missionary fields of the Church (the investigation being divided among committees, as before). On the background of the attitude and the general information acquired in the first and more extensive project, it was quite possible through class coöperation to get a considerable body of knowledge even in four Sundays, one to each field. It should be added that at the close of the four weeks on China, a class prayer for the missionary work of the Church was prepared by a committee, criticized, revised, memorized, and used throughout the remaining Sundays. A simple pageant was given (with the help of a girls' class that had become interested in the project) and an invitation extended to Sam Lee's boy to attend their Sunday School class. While he did not become a regular attendant he did come occasionally and was always treated with the greatest consideration.

From the above outline, when compared with the table of "value tests" at the beginning of this section, it will be seen that this experience fulfilled in a measure each of the ten tests suggested:

(1) It was undertaken by the voluntary choice of the class.

(2) It had a worthwhile objective—the acquiring of a sound basis of information on which to base their attitude toward the Chinese and determine their class policy as to missionary contributions.

(3) It was a typical life situation—as long as they are in the Church they will be called upon from time to time to give to various missionary and other benevolent causes; they will frequently be in doubt as to the course to pursue, and they will meet with the various objections that were described above.

(4) The whole undertaking was an example of a very purposeful activity—it was not mere "hand-work" or the recitation of lessons, but a carefully planned undertaking for the purpose of securing knowledge and determining action.

(5) Its aim was altruistic—not the mere acquisition of knowledge for its own sake but the decision as to a gift from the class and of their individual attitude toward those who were religiously in need.

(6) It was carried on as a coöperative enterprise—decided upon by the group, the sub-topics divided out among members or committees of the group, the results shared with the group, and evaluated by the group, with group action upon the findings.

(7) They began with a presentation of alternative attitudes toward missions in China, and after securing the basic facts they deliberated upon the results and decided upon a course of action.

(8) Their knowledge of Christian missions in China (as well as of China and the Chinese generally) was greatly enriched by the process and inasmuch as the various mission fields have much in common there was naturally a certain amount of "carry-over" from this to their attitude toward Church missions generally.

(9) It was psychologically complete in that it included feeling, knowledge, and action. At the beginning they were brought face to face with a problem, they analyzed the factors in the situation, they used their own rather scanty past experience and the experience of the teacher (who was, however, very careful not to assume the rôle of dictator), and the experience of the race as recorded and made available to them in books and magazines.

(10) At the end they summarized their conclusions in a "finding" upon which action was immediately based, and expressed their opinion of the value of the report by asking for similar courses on other mission fields.

In this brief description we see the characteristic features of the "life-situation," "experience-centred," "problem-discussion," or "project method" type of curriculum. Each of these four terms has its own distinctive significance, but that they have much in common is seen from the fact that they can all be applied to the above example.

We notice that under this conception of the curriculum it includes not only the experience of study but also other experiences as well; that it is connected closely with every-day life and (in this instance, although not necessarily in every instance) grew naturally out of an actual life situation; that it involves purposeful activity by the class on an enterprise voluntarily undertaken by them; and that throughout the teacher was in the background, suggesting, guiding, helping, rather than dictating. This was true "experience under guidance"—the enrichment, interpretation, evaluation, and control of experience in the light of Christian standards and purposes. It thus represents the most effective form of religious education.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

For bibliography see Chapter 3.

CHAPTER SIX

The Project in Religious Education

The "project" (in which the teacher prepares and the class under the guidance of the teacher plans, executes, and evaluates) is a typical, although not the only expression of the new ideals in religious education. Good education will make use of the project, and also other methods.

I. DEFINITION

The word "project" as an educational term was apparently first used in connection with agricultural education and denoted an enterprise undertaken by an individual or group as a method of acquiring a practical and useful knowledge of certain processes. From that it spread into general public school terminology and now is being used widely in religious education.

There is no generally accepted definition; each writer prefers his own, and while these agree in substance they differ slightly in details and in emphasis.

In order to present the general idea of the "project method" or "project principle" most clearly it will be useful to put side by side several of the recent definitions of "project"—remembering that these are not so much different meanings as different ways of saying fundamentally the same thing:

(1) "A project is a problematic act carried to completion in its natural setting." (J. Alford Stevenson, Ph.D., in *The Project Method in Education.*)

(2) "A project may be tentatively defined as a single unified experience utilized because of its social value, which can be entered into with a wholehearted purpose, which is representative of real life situations, and which makes for control of new situations as they are

met." (Erwin L. Shaver, in *The Project Principle in Religious Education.*)

(3) "A project is an enterprise entered into purposefully which is of interest to the class or group which shares in planning, judging, and carrying it through to completion. The spirit and the end in view determine whether it is a project in religious education or not." (A. J. W. Myers, in *Teaching Religion.*)

(4) "The project method sets the child at work upon some real project, problem, or enterprise suited to his interest and related to his experience, and expects him to gather information, discover facts and relationships, work out solutions, and finally carry the enterprise through to completion." (*Ibid.*)

(5) "A project is a purposeful problematic activity voluntarily undertaken by the class in which its members share in planning and executing the project and in evaluating the results."

(6) "A project in religious education is an enterprise with a religious objective voluntarily undertaken by the class, whose members share in planning, executing, and evaluating it."

(7) "A project curriculum is a series of integrally related units of experience; each centering upon a definite Christian purpose; each resulting in a clearer understanding of the meaning of the Christian life, a deeper feeling of fellowship with, appreciation for, and loyalty to, the person and cause of Jesus, and at least the beginnings of definite habits of Christian life and service; each representing a socially serviceable objective as well as a subjective outcome; and in each of which there is the largest possible democratic group coöperation in the discovery and wider sharing of what is learned." (Erwin L. Shaver, in *A Project Curriculum for Young People.*)

II. PRINCIPLES

The dominance of the "project" in contemporary educational theory is not a mere fad (although some of its advocates may be faddists) but is the logical consequence and summing up of certain educational principles, each of which by itself will be readily recognized as sound and self-evident. We may state these as follows:

(1) The best preparation for life is practise in living, and the more nearly our schools are selective cross-sections of life the more effective they will be in preparing for life.

(2) The strongest incentive to effort is a worthwhile purpose voluntarily formed or accepted.

(3) The most effective way to assimilate an idea is to use it.

(4) The most powerful stimulus to thought is a problem requiring solution.

(5) The best preparation for citizenship in a democracy is practice in coöperative thinking and working.

It will be seen at once that the project, as defined above (and illustrated in the next section), is a concrete expression and utilization of the above five educational axioms. In other words, it is (1) a worthwhile enterprise (a bit of actual life-experience). (2) voluntarily entered upon, in which emphasis is laid upon (3) the pupils actually doing something themselves and which (4) involves the solution of various problems in the process of working it out, and in which (5) the class thinks and works together. This will be exemplified in the illustrations given below.

III. ILLUSTRATIONS

(1) *A Service Project.*

In a certain Sunday School the superintendent announced that during the coming month each class in the school would be asked to do something or give something for some one of the various charitable institutions of the city. A class of young people, after considerable discussion, selected the Home for the Blind as the institution which they would help. Several proposals were made—that they take up a special class collection for them, that they earn or save money during the month for them, that they take part in a church bazaar and give the proceeds to the blind, that they solicit contributions from others, etc. These were debated pro and con. Finally it was decided that instead of giving money or its equivalent, they would give them "a good time"—to cheer them up and bring to them a touch of the outside world. They decided to have a Sunday afternoon service at the Home and a program was prepared. A committee after some search selected a psalm to be memorized and repeated in concert by the class. A prayer to be repeated in concert was proposed and suggestions were invited and received from all members of the class. These were finally put into

shape by a small committee and the prayer then copied and given to each member. Two suitable hymns were selected, learned, and practised thoroughly for the occasion. A poem was found and prepared for recitation by a member of the class who was especially gifted in that way. A "class newspaper" was prepared—five members of the class each selected from the news of the past few weeks a few events of outstanding importance in one particular realm—politics, religion, science, literature, and local items respectively. The finding, selecting, and sifting of this material so as to keep only the very best involved considerable search and careful discrimination. Another member of the class carefully summarized the sermon of the rector on the Sunday morning preceding the visitation—and did it well. Finally, by gifts from personal allowances or earnings they purchased a copy of the *Gospel According to St. John* in the Braille type for presentation at the close of the service (having ascertained from the director of the institution that they did not already have one). The program was carried out as planned without a hitch; the following Sunday morning they discussed it and without a dissenting voice declared it was one of the most enjoyable experiences they had ever had, and voted to make it an annual event.

(2) *A Study Project.*

It was during a lesson on the Resurrection. One of the members of the class quoted Thomas A. Edison to the effect that he knew of no scientific evidence of the immortality of the soul. This produced a marked impression on the class. Another member, however, replied that she had seen a later statement by Edison in a well known magazine to the effect that he now believed the evidence was in favor of immortality. A third one commented, "Well, I guess Edison ought to know if anybody does—he is the greatest scientist in the world, isn't he?" The teacher queried, "Does that make him an authority on religion—or art—or medicine—or law?" "I suppose not," was the reply, "but anyhow, science and religion are almost always

in conflict, aren't they? And we have got to choose which to believe."

Another said: "But how can they be in conflict if they are both true?" The teacher asked, "The spirit of science is to find out the facts and follow the evidence whether we like it or not, isn't it?" "Yes." "Then, suppose we turn scientists for a few weeks and find out the facts for ourselves, as to whether there is a necessary conflict between religion and science, and if so, what it is about, and if not, then why it is that we are always hearing about such a conflict."

The proposal met with instant acceptance—although some seemed a little fearful of the result! The class was divided into committees—one committee was to find out what was the attitude of present-day scientists toward religion, another was to study the historic illustrations of conflict between theologians and scientists, another to work out an accurate definition of the purpose, scope, and limitations of science, another to ascertain the attitude of modern theology toward science with especial reference to our present conceptions of the nature and limitations of Scriptural inspiration. The teacher promised to mail to the chairman of each committee some references for reading but urged that they also find some material of their own.

Six weeks were devoted to research and class discussions on these various topics, together with some others that developed as they went along. The teacher carefully refrained from dictating the conclusions to be reached, and confined his participation to helping with the references for study and insisting upon thoroughgoing, persistent thinking rather than being content with "snap judgments" or superficial conclusions. The net results to the members of the class were:

(1) An enhanced appreciation of the religious significance of science as one of the ways in which God reveals His truth to men.

(2) A recognition of the mutual limitations of science and theology and the necessity for each to respect territorial boundaries.

(3) A conviction that the majority of the greatest scientists have been fundamentally religious men.

(4) The removal of any fear of scientific conclusions and a willingness to accept any and all truth and interpret it religiously.

(3) *A Recreation Project.*

Several new members had been brought into the class of boys recently and someone proposed that they celebrate by having some kind of a "class doings." A number of alternative plans were proposed—going to a popular movie play then running, attending a ball game in a body, challenging another class to a ball game, an overnight hike including swimming, wiener roast, and camping out, or giving a dance at the parish house. Opinion seemed nearly evenly divided. The teacher proposed that instead of putting it to a vote immediately and deciding by a bare majority, merely on the basis of what each one liked the best, they think over the whole question of recreation—the advantages and disadvantages of each of these types and the basis on which to choose our "majors" in group recreation, promising meanwhile to accept readily and coöperate in whatever might be the final decision of the class after they had really thought the problem through.

Committees were appointed to study the merits and demerits of each of the proposed types of recreation, and another committee was to formulate a general statement of principles on which to base choices in recreational activities. Care was taken by the teacher to avoid any suggestion that the reports of the five special committees were to constitute in any way a debate between them in which the object of each was to prove its case. Rather, it was emphasized that they were engaged in a coöperative search for facts and that each committee should endeavor to report impartially both the strong and the weak points of the particular type of recreation studied. A few references were given and a few test questions were suggested, but for the most part the whole project was left in the hands of the class.

After three weeks of study and discussion with partial reports on each Sunday, the final reports were made and correlated, with the result that the decision was all but unanimous

in favor of the overnight hike, not only as the immediate project for the class but as containing more elements of real recreational value than any of the other plans. Committees were then appointed to arrange for the hike and the related activities. After a good hike and a good swim they had a campfire supper, stunts, and story-telling period, a "good-night talk" by the leader, a period of silent and vocal prayer (very informal and real, touching their own life problems) by the boys, and then bed.

The Sunday after their return they unanimously voted this the best of any of their class outings and voted for a repetition of it next time.

(4) *A Worship Project.*

As the class was settling down, one of the members remarked: "One thing is sure—I am not going to stay to church today. I did last Sunday and the sermon was the dullest thing I ever heard. I don't mind going to church when I get something out of it, but I am not going to waste my time listening to sermons that have nothing to do with life today."

The general sentiment of the class seemed to be pretty much with her although the others did not express themselves so positively. The teacher made no comment on what had been said but remarked, "By the way, speaking about attending church, I live in the same block with a Roman Catholic church and I notice every Sunday morning a large number of people pouring out of that church before breakfast—probably they have been attending early Mass. I wonder why they attend so well?" Several suggestions were offered and while no conclusion was attempted it became evident to the class that a "good sermon" was not the only attraction for church attendance—that there was such a thing as worship even without a sermon. It was also discovered that worship (in some sense) was the most fundamental element in religion.

Some one asked why it was that different denominations and different religions had such widely different methods of worship, and this led to the suggestion that the class be divided into

five committees—one to attend service next week at a Jewish synagogue, one to attend the Greek Orthodox service, another a Quaker meeting, and the fourth a Salvation Army street meeting, while the fifth committee was to make a report on the customs of worship among savage tribes—the teacher helping to furnish library references for this. Each committee was to analyze and endeavor to appreciate the type of worship which it studied and report back to the class the following Sunday with a description and a sympathetic criticism of the service, showing what were the dominant notes in its appeal, what its strong points, and what—if any—its weak points or dangers. Attention was called to the necessity for entering into the services sympathetically as an active and devout participant, so far as possible, so as to interpret them from the inside.

It took two Sundays to receive and discuss all the reports and evaluate the discoveries made; but it resulted in a tremendously enhanced appreciation of the centrality of worship in religion, a spirit of brotherliness toward those of other faiths, and a request that this be followed by a study of the Prayer Book, its origin, history, and contents.

The class then attended an early morning Communion Service in their own church, making it a corporate Communion of the class; and the following Sunday attended the eleven o'clock celebration at the Cathedral of the diocese, in which a full and rich eucharistic ceremonial was practised. (Before attending this service the teacher made it a point to post herself on the usage at the Cathedral and on the symbolism of the vestments, ritual, etc., and explained these to the class in advance, so that when they did take part it was as a group of intelligent worshippers rather than a company of sightseers.) An analysis of the elements of worship was then worked out by the class, followed by a study of how the Prayer Book service expressed and ministered to these.

At the close of the eighth week spent in this way, the teacher asked the class to look back over the period and write out (individually) their estimate of what had been accom-

plished by it and what it meant to them. Some remarkably thoughtful papers came in response to this request; but the best response of all was the fact that never again in that class was there any suggestion of non-attendance at church because of lack of interest in the sermon.

IV. ANALYSIS

From the above illustrations, it will be seen:

(a) That the project method embodies in concrete form the five educational axioms given in Section II of this chapter.

(b) That the project method exemplifies in the highest degree the ten educational value tests of experience described in Chapter 5. For:

1. In each case, although suggested by the teacher, the project was voluntarily accepted and decided upon by the class.
2. The objective was worth while—no mere trivial thing.
3. Each project grew out of or was related to some definite experience in the lives of the class members—an experience or situation which was typical of life.
4. It included more than mere study of an assigned lesson—it involved action.
5. The purpose was altruistic.
6. It involved social coöperation—the whole class worked together on the project, dividing up their membership into smaller groups for more effective coöperation.
7. It required repeated deliberation over alternatives.
8. The knowledge acquired incidentally for the purpose of carrying out the objective was knowledge which was worth while in its own right, and being associated with action it was all the more certain to be retained.
9. The project was psychologically complete—it included the acquisition of knowledge, the expression and deepening or modifying of some feeling, and the definite determination and execution of a purpose.
10. The result was prayerfully evaluated at the end.

V. CONCLUSIONS

It might seem that the natural conclusion from the foregoing would be that the project is the ideal and perfect method of education, and that the entire curriculum should be organized on a project basis. But such an unqualified assertion would

be too sweeping. The project method is subject to certain limitations which do not detract from its value as a method but which do make it necessary to supplement it in certain respects. It has not been shown to be sufficient in itself to bear the whole burden of the curriculum.

(1) It requires too much time. The very thoroughness of the method involves a greater expenditure of time than could possibly be given to every part of the curriculum. It is, however, particularly useful in introducing a subject and giving a viewpoint and method of approach.

(2) It is unsystematic. It does not give a complete and organized body of knowledge. It therefore needs to be supplemented by a more systematic treatment of subjects, which will tend to knit together the related items of knowledge drawn from several kindred projects and unify these into a body of classified knowledge.

(3) In the field of secular education a reaction has already set in against the exclusive dominance of the project method and terminology in progressive schools. Educators today are talking more in terms of a "unified curriculum" in which the various elements of it are grouped around some one interest.

One other thing remains to be said. If the initial approach to a topic is made through a project and from time to time fresh projects are taken up, the class will be apt to develop what may be called a "project attitude" toward the whole process of learning which will help them attack the task of completing and systematizing their knowledge with zest and enthusiasm. Indeed, it is often found possible so to motivate this process that it will in turn become a self-chosen project.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Stevenson, *The Project Method in Education.*
Shaver, *The Project Principle in Religious Education.*
Crum, *The Project in Religious Education.*
Danielson and Perkins, *Teaching Without Textbooks.*
Shaver, *A Project Curriculum for Young People.*
Shaver, *Present-Day Trends in Religious Education.*
Towner, *One Hundred Projects for the Church School.*

CHAPTER SEVEN

Building the Curriculum

To outline a curriculum for the Church School is of course beyond the scope of this book, but it may not be out of place to suggest a mode of procedure and call attention to some of the probable characteristics of such a curriculum and the consequent modifications in the present methods of organization and teaching.

I. CHARACTERISTICS

(1) *A curriculum of experiences.*

The basic fact is that the new curriculum of religious education will be essentially a curriculum of experiences. It will not be primarily a course of lessons or a series of text books but an organized body of experiences under guidance for the attainment of definite objectives. In this connection it should be remembered that here, as throughout this book, the term "experience" is used in its broadest educational significance. Too often it has been taken as antithetical to "lesson study," but in reality it is inclusive of that rather than contrasted with it. The study of an assigned lesson, the memorizing of a passage of Scripture or catechism, is an "experience" but it is not the only kind of experience, and its educational value as an experience depends upon the attendant circumstances. Participation in worship, coöperation in service, sharing of possessions with others, discussion of life problems, participating in recreational activities—all these are equally "experiences," and the educational value of each and its claim to a place in the curriculum depends upon the degree to which it measures up to the educational tests suggested in chapter five.

We wish to emphasize this point because so many have supposed that the use of the word "experience" instead of the familiar word "lesson" implied the elimination or neglect of real study and intellectual effort. On the contrary, "experience" as used here may and often does mean an intellectual effort of the most intense kind, because it is the expression of a definite, self-chosen purpose. But the word "experience" is preferred because it includes everything covered by the word "lesson," and more.

The new curriculum therefore will include, for example, experiences of purposeful study—the acquisition of knowledge because it is needed for the accomplishment of a purpose formed or accepted by the class, rather than merely covering a certain number of pages in a text book because it is the assigned "lesson" for that day.

The curriculum will include also planned experiences of worship together—worship so planned and carried out that it is felt to have a definite relation to life. Oftentimes the worship will grow out of a particular experience of study, of deliberative thought, or of Christian service in which the group is at that time engaged. It will be the natural expression of a felt need for guidance and the instinctive recognition of the partnership of God with the class in their undertakings for Him.

There will also be experiences of group participation in acts of Christian service and helpfulness to others, experiences of giving, experiences in preparing and presenting pageants and biblical dramas, experiences in personal contacts with those of other nationalities or conditions in life, perhaps coupled with study of their problems and coöperative effort in helpfulness to them, in betterment of their condition, and in developing Christian fellowship between separated or antagonistic groups, etc.

(2) *Emphasis on method and sources.*

The tendency in the new curriculum will be away from dated lessons or fixed bodies of subject matter to be imparted

"just so," and toward furnishing "curriculum guides" for teachers and others, giving full references to sources together with practical suggestions for use of these and for guidance of the pupils in the better understanding of the experiences through which they will be led.

The older type of curriculum provides for each grade a block of subject matter, cut up into short weekly sections called "lessons." This subject matter (in some courses coupled with more or less related expressional activities) was to be "got over" to the class, and the accomplishment (or supposed accomplishment) of this constituted a successful lesson.

The tendency in the new curriculum will be increasingly toward indicating for each unit of work an aim to be achieved, several possible approaches or situations out of which this might grow or to which it might be related, possible plans for carrying through the proposed project or experience, and very full references to sources of material in literature, art, music, nature, and every-day life, which may be used by the teacher and the group in the course of the project or experience. It is not meant that this will be true of all courses or true at once, but the tendency will be in this direction.

(3) *Organized into units of work.*

There is a tendency for courses to be organized into "units of work" covering several weeks, rather than into rigidly separated weekly lessons. Where the division into weekly lessons is maintained, it is likely they will be grouped into larger units and the weekly separations considered secondary and tentative in character. The object of the teacher will not be to "cover the lesson" (or the course) in the time allotted, but to lead the pupils into an experience which is educationally and religiously worth while.

(4) *Comprehensive in scope and flexible in use.*

Instead of having one particular course to be taken by all classes of a certain grade, we shall ultimately have a large

variety of possible courses (in outline, and with source material) from which the individual Church School may choose.

A generation ago it was widely assumed by most Protestant Churches that the ideal curriculum was one uniform lesson for all classes of all ages all over the world—of course with adaptations in treatment for the various ages. Then it was recognized that there should be different lessons for different ages, and the International Graded Lesson System, the Christian Nurture Series, the Episcopal Church Series, and others, came into existence. These provided for the use of a certain lesson on a certain Sunday by all classes of the same age or grade in all Sunday Schools. It was a great step forward over the policy of the same lessons for all ages; but it did not sufficiently recognize the individual differences in schools and parishes. We are now beginning to see that the ideal of a rigidly standardized curriculum into which, like the bed of Procrustes, all classes of the same age must be fitted, is not sound education.

One of the distinct contributions which the Department of Religious Education of the Episcopal Church has made is its insistence upon local autonomy in the selection of lesson courses, recognizing the impossibility of making all schools fit into the same educational mold. The chief difficulty in applying this principle has been the lack of a sufficient number of worthwhile courses prepared or adapted for use in our Church. Side by side with this insistence upon the right and duty of the parish to build its own curriculum must go a steadily increasing supply of available material.

The interests, viewpoints, and educational needs of two groups of children of the same age or public school grade, but of different social and economic conditions, may differ far more widely than the interests and capacities of children of slightly different ages in the same parish. There must therefore be a large number of possible courses provided in order to provide flexibility in selection to fit local needs. This im-

plies, of course, that we should increasingly expect the individual parish to exercise its right to build its own curriculum, *i.e.,* to select from the wealth of available material those particular courses or units that will best meet the educational and spiritual needs of the children and youth of that parish.

Attention is called to the excellent although very brief leaflet on this subject by Miss Frances R. Edwards, published by our national Department of Religious Education, entitled *Curriculum Building in Your Parish.*

One further word must be said here. While the ideal is for the educational leadership of the parish to examine the possible courses and select their curriculum materials in the light of the needs of their Church School pupils, it is necessary to remember that at present by far the larger part of our Church School leaders are not educationally equipped to discharge this responsibility; and the clergyman whose seminary training has been almost exclusively theological, with little pedagogical training or experience, is in no better case. They would be hopelessly bewildered if called upon to "build their own curriculum." One of the major problems of our national and diocesan leaders in religious education is to stir up the consciences of those rectors who have not realized or not accepted their educational responsibility in this matter; and it is to be hoped that the Department of Religious Education will continue to stress this, in season and out of season. Meanwhile, in view of the existing situation, we must include in our total curriculum material a number of courses which are so planned as to be most likely to meet the needs of the average school and average class. These courses must be very simple in what they require of the teacher, so that the school which is educationally handicapped and must be given *"table d'hote* service" will have its felt needs provided for. It is to be expected that our schools will increasingly progress beyond this stage, but so long as so many of them are thus situated it would be foolish and unfair to neglect them.

(5) *Departmental grading.*

Even where there is a standardized system of fixed lesson courses to be used, there is a distinct trend away from the old "closely-graded" conception of the curriculum, in which the courses must be taken in a designated and inflexible order, each annual course presumably representing one year's advance in difficulty over that which preceded it. The trend now is toward departmental grading, and courses taught in rotation—*i.e.,* regarding all the pupils of a certain three-year age-group as constituting a department, however many classes there may be in it, and then providing three courses for use in that department in annual rotation, Course 1 being taught this year, Course 2 next year, Course 3 the following year, etc. In this way pupils entering that department this year will begin with Course 1 and follow with Courses 2 and 3; those entering next year will begin with Course 2 and follow with Courses 3 and 1, etc., all three courses being of about the same degree of difficulty and none of them necessarily presupposing a knowledge of the others.

While this departmental grading system was first developed in order to meet the needs of the small school where it is not possible to have a course for each annual grade, it has worked so well that there has been a tendency to adopt it (at least so far as the lesson grading is concerned) in the larger schools also.

The new type of courses, being less predominantly intellectual in emphasis, on the whole lends itself well to this type of organization and in fact it goes further, for it provides not three only but many possible courses for use in a given departmental age-group.

II. CONSTRUCTION

In the construction of a curriculum of religious education there are three possible viewpoints:

(1) To start from a fixed body of knowledge looked upon as revealed truth and embodied in Scripture or catechism, and

assume that the task of the teacher and the school is to impart a knowledge of that truth to the pupil. A distinguished Sunday School speaker of a former generation expressed this viewpoint succinctly in these words: "Here is a Book; there is a boy; the task of the teacher is to get the Book into the boy." This viewpoint has been tacitly assumed in the past and lingers on in many quarters today. It makes the curriculum content-centred instead of child-centred or life-centred. It tends to an almost exclusive emphasis upon knowledge as the objective and the transmission of an unchanged and unchanging past as the essential process in education. It is, of course, no longer generally held by educators and remains only as one of the difficulties to be overcome in promoting real religious education today.

We may safely assume that religious material (such as is contained in the Scriptures, for example) which has proved its vitality and adaptability by its survival through the centuries is not in any serious danger of proving unusable today. It will be used in the new curriculum and used, it is to be hoped, with even greater effect than in the past. But it is educationally unsound to start from an assumed fixed content and endeavor to fit the child to it.

(2) In reaction against this viewpoint education has been becoming increasingly child-centred. We have studied the child, his interests, needs, and capacities, and we have said that "the need of the child is the law of the school." This has helped to counteract the lingering influence of the older viewpoint. But even this is not in and of itself quite sufficient. It needs supplementing or at least interpretation. We are concerned not merely with the child as he is but with the child as he ought to be and as we seek to help him become—in other words, with the objective of religious education, with the child's relation to God in Christ, with the qualities that will result from this or contribute to it.*

* An excellent treatment of this subject will be found in Ch. 4 of *Open Doors in Religious Education*, by Rev. J. W. Suter, Jr.

Science can tell us much about what the child is, but it can tell us nothing about what he ought to be. For the objectives of religious education we go to religion, not science. And since education is, as Professor Thorndike says, "the production of changes in developing human beings," we cannot even rightly begin the process until we first decide the direction of the desired changes, the kind of human being that we wish him to become. Even if we were to say (as some followers of Dr. Dewey would seem to hold) that the ideal education is not to produce any particular type of character or belief, but only to develop the critical intelligence of the pupil, that in itself is a predetermined objective.

(3) So we come to the third viewpoint, which is to begin with the objective, the type of character and personality that we desire to develop, and then discover how we may lead the child to develop this type of character in the various areas of experience. One expression of this viewpoint is to be found in the "character traits" analysis and the chart of the "areas of human experiences" recently published by the International Council of Religious Education. This represents a distinct forward step in the approach to the curriculum-building problem. Rightly interpreted and wisely used, it can be made most helpful in our approach to the curriculum problem. It is, however, capable of being so presented as to justify the criticism of it made by Professor Coe, to the effect that it is apt to develop a fragmentary character composed of a mosaic of individually good qualities but lacking in cohesion, and emphasizing abstract qualities rather than real solutions of real problems.

In a curriculum built up on the basis of the second viewpoint, the general method would be to discover through analysis the typical situations, experiences, problems, and relationships of the child at various ages and under various conditions, and then seek to give a religious interpretation to these relationships, help him to react rightly to the situations and experiences, and guide him into a Christian solution of the problems. It

will be seen that while this approach is professedly based upon the child, it implicitly assumes, without elaboration, a concept which it calls the "religious interpretation" or "Christian solution." It does not escape the assumption of an objective; it only avoids defining it.

The other (third) approach, referred to above as "objective-centred," first defines in general terms the objectives to be attained, and then seeks to discover or provide experiences for the child which will lead to the attainment of the objective. And while this approach professedly begins with the objective, the objective itself is stated in terms of the child's life and character. The difference between the two viewpoints, while real, is thus not absolute. The two points of view are really supplementary and perhaps the decision between them is more a question of educational convenience and feasibility than of fundamental principle. We are inclined to favor the latter, but feel that in its application it should be constantly checked by comparison with the former.

In both of these approaches the body of truth (assumed as a starting-point in the first viewpoint above) will be used, but it will be used as material for the attainment of Christian objectives in the pupil.

III. CONSEQUENCES

Certain changes in the administrative organization and equipment of the school are likely to follow upon the adoption of the new type of curriculum.

(1) *A different type of teacher.*

With the emphasis upon democratic participation by class and teacher in working out the curriculum, we shall tend to develop teachers who are leaders and companions of youth, rather than drill-masters and lecturers. The teacher of the future will be not a mere hearer of recitations but an inspiring friend and guide to the group. The teacher who depends altogether upon the teachers' manual with its ready-made ques-

tions will quickly pass into the discard and will be succeeded by the teacher who reads widely and lives fully. The teacher will have his face turned toward the rising rather than the setting sun and will seek to lead his group in the joyous adventure of being workers together with God in the building of a better world. The teacher's preparation will not be completed by taking a given number of training course units, but will be a continuing process of reading and thinking and experimenting, drawing constantly upon the resources of nature, books, magazines, newspapers, and every-day life. The task of the teacher will thus become one which will increasingly challenge and attract the men and women of highest ability in the Church.

(2) *Larger classes and class-rooms.*

Both because of the nature of the curriculum, with its varied experiences and activities, and also because of the need for using teachers of the highest ability (of whom there are necessarily few in each parish), there will be a tendency toward fewer and larger classes, and consequently a need for larger and better equipped class-rooms.

The curriculum being more personal and informal, there will develop closer ties between teacher and pupils and we shall no longer assume that a class should necessarily pass each year to another teacher. Better a few good teachers teaching twice the number for a longer time than a large number of minutely separated groups with a lower average of ability and personality on the part of the teachers. The ideal Church School class is an extension of the ideal home circle.

(3) *Flexible grouping.*

It is even possible that a pupil may not necessarily remain in the same class for an entire term or year. Instead of being grouped according to age and public school grade, it is quite possible that the pupils of a given department may on occasion be re-grouped according to the nature of the project they are

taking up and this grouping be changed after the completion of the given project. Of course this is not a necessary feature of the new curriculum; it is simply a possibility which may be utilized in some cases. The general principle, however, is that the class groupings shall not be looked upon as hard and fast organic units but should be subject to modification from time to time in the interest of true educational efficiency.

(4) *A source library.*

The school, or rather the parish, will necessarily have a library of source materials—books, courses, project outlines, curriculum guides, collections of stories, biblical dramas, pageants and pageantry material, etc. The Church School leaders will learn also how to use the public library or school library in preparation for their work, together with magazines, newspapers, and other current material.

(5) *Constant improvement.*

Both teacher and courses will almost of necessity constantly improve under the new plan. The fact that the curriculum is flexible and varied rather than static will make for experimentation, research, preparation of new courses, enrichment of existing courses through the discovery of new material, etc. And the necessity of using this constantly changing material, supplementing last year's outlines with new references and with suggestions drawn from experience, will prevent a teacher from degenerating into a mere drill-master, asking stereotyped questions, and checking the answers by a printed manual—or even (in elementary grades) telling the same stories in the same way year after year. A flexible curriculum means a steadily improving school and steadily improving teachers.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Suter, *Open Doors in Religious Education.*
Vieth, *Objectives in Religious Education.*
Vieth, *The Development of a Curriculum of Religious Education.*
Charters, *Curriculum Construction.*

Bower, *The Curriculum of Religious Education.*
Betts, *The Curriculum of Religious Education.*
Shaver, *A Project Curriculum for Young People.*
Skinner, *A Curriculum Study for Teachers of Primary Grades.*
Skinner, *A Curriculum Study for Teachers of Juniors.*
Skinner, *A Curriculum Study for Teachers of Beginners.*
International Curriculum Guide (Children's Division).
International Curriculum Guide (Young People's Division).
International Curriculum Guide (Adult Division).
Case, *Liberal Christianity and Religious Education.*

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Discussion Group Method

I. WHAT

(1) *Definition.*

The discussion group plan is a coöperative technique of group thinking. It is a method for enabling a group of persons animated by a common purpose but differing in knowledge, opinions, and viewpoints, to arrive at conclusions which will take into account the differing points of view and furnish a basis for united action.

In a typical discussion group some problem derived from or related to the life-situations of its members is taken up for consideration. The problem or difficulty is stated, the relevant factors are considered, various viewpoints expressed, possibilities listed, and agreements summarized. Disagreements as to facts are cleared up by study and investigation, disagreements as to opinions and viewpoints are, if possible, resolved by free and frank discussion, a conclusion is reached, and ways and means agreed upon for carrying out the decision.

The discussion group, when rightly conducted, is one of the most effective methods for use with young people and adults. It is more vital than the method used in most Bible classes, for its topics grow out of actual life-situations and express felt needs of its members. Its members work harder than in most classes because each one is given a real share in the proceedings and is expected to make a real contribution to the solution of the common problem. The study is more apt to be real and thoughtful because it is practical and definite—the members of the group are not expected merely to seek for "knowledge in general" or knowledge for its own sake, but for the specific bits

of knowledge that have a definite relation to the problem that is to be solved by them. It represents the maximum of democracy and self-activity. It is not, however, to be regarded as the only method or as necessarily the best method for all classes. It is a method primarily for groups composed of persons who are earnestly interested in the subject and are willing to do some reading or study in preparation for the group sessions. Its members should look upon themselves as a body of research associates rather than as a club for unprepared discussion and mere exchange of ideas. To exchange ignorances is not to increase knowledge. The development of the discussion group method has been hurt rather than helped by its indiscriminate use to the exclusion of other methods, and by applying the name to groups (young or old) whose members merely air their views and express their opinions, without doing the study necessary to insure having views worth expressing.

(2) *Contrasts.*

(a) The discussion group method is not a mere "talk-fest" where a number of people get together and without preparation, plan, or effective leadership, "exchange ideas"—or lack of ideas. There is no magic in conversation to create knowledge where none existed before. Only where there is serious purpose, willingness to study in order to supplement present knowledge, and the guidance of a group leader will this be a successful plan. "Group thinking is not a process by which individuals pool their ignorance with the expectation that reliable results will follow." (Elliott.)

(b) Neither is the discussion group a debate or argument between two sides. A debate is a controversy between representatives of two viewpoints, whereas in a discussion group there are as many viewpoints as there are participants. In a debate the object is to win the argument; in the discussion group the purpose is to solve a problem through ascertaining the truth, including the values represented by all the members of the group. In a debate the emphasis is upon formal logic; in a group

discussion more account is taken of psychology, human feelings, and relationships.

(c) Another method with which the discussion group is sometimes confused is the "forum" in which a speaker presents a subject and then submits to questioning, both by those seeking further elucidation of his opinion and by those who seek merely to heckle him. This is of course quite different from a group in which all coöperate in a search for truth and a common viewpoint.

(d) The name "discussion group" is frequently applied also to a method of teaching in which the leader works out in advance an outline leading to a predetermined conclusion, the "discussion" by the members of the group being simply a process through which they are led to the understanding and acceptance of the position assumed by the leader at the beginning as his goal. This is quite an effective pedagogic device and uses in general the Herbartian technique (the "five formal steps" of preparation, presentation, association, generalization, and application), but it is not in the fullest sense what is meant by the term "discussion group" as here used. It is a method of instruction, not a program for coöperative discovery. Its aim is to lead the members to accept the viewpoint of the leader, not to understand, appreciate, and include in a higher synthesis the viewpoints and purposes held by the members of the group. It has been admirably set forth in *The Method of the Discussion Group,* by Miss Laura Boyer, and for its own purpose it is an admirable method; but it is not the type of cooperative group thinking to which the term discussion group is more specifically applicable.

II. WHY

The rapidly growing popularity of the discussion group idea is due to four facts:

(1) *It is in accord with the spirit of the age.* The temper of our times is not congenial to arbitrary authority, whether in the realm of government, industry, education, or religion.

The overthrow of monarchical systems of government; the development of labor unions, profit-sharing, and employee representation in management of industry; the socialized recitation, project method, and student government in education; the increasing reluctance to attribute infallibility and inerrancy to Church or Scripture in religion; all of these are expressions of a growing spirit of democracy in human life. It is a part of the supreme respect for personality as such which was the gift of the divine founder of Christianity to human society. "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." "God is no respecter of persons."

(2) *It is training in democracy.* By democracy is meant "the participation of all who are involved in a given situation, each in proportion to his ability." (Elliott.) If we are to have a full democracy we must in some way accustom men to thinking and planning together in a spirit of cöoperation and mutual respect, rather than in an attitude of arbitrary domination or of carrying a point by force of argument and number of votes. Instead of having real thinking done by a few and then the results submitted to the masses for ratification or rejection, we must accustom the whole body of citizens to coöperate in the discovery of truth and right. At present most citizens take no part in the determination of public policies, except to vote on propositions submitted to them. They do not have the experience of coöperatively thinking out the issues of fact and feeling involved therein. What public discussion takes place is chiefly argument and appeals for the support of a certain side in a contest—not the calm, deliberate, coöperative search for truth, "following the argument wherever it may lead."

If we are ever to have an *intelligently* democratic government in this country, it can come only through an increasing participation of the rank and file of the citizenship in thinking out problems instead of merely registering approval or disapproval of policies thought out by others.

The discussion group affords a concrete exemplification of exactly the method which ought ideally to be followed in the

determination of public policies—municipal, state, or national. It trains for intelligent participation in democratic government through practice in democratic thinking.

(3) *It is a most effective way to secure coöperation in a joint undertaking.* It is a commonplace observation that people will take part more actively and enthusiastically in a project in the determination of which they have had a share than in carrying out a ready-made plan handed down to them by others. Merely as a device for enlisting coöperation of all in a common purpose, and irrespective of any other consideration, the discussion group method fully justifies itself.

In this connection it is to be remembered that in a discussion group the procedure is not that of listening to argument on both sides of a question and then submitting it to a vote, expecting the minority to accept the decision of the majority and coöperate in carrying it out. Even this would be better than the arbitrary imposition of a policy without opportunity for expression of dissenting views. But the discussion group goes deeper than that. In the properly conducted discussion group, after a question to be considered has been stated and its constituent elements brought out, the various alternative possibilities are stated and then the points of fact or opinion or purpose on which all are agreed are summarized and set aside. The matters of fact on which the group is not agreed are next taken up and instead of being argued about are investigated—perhaps by referring the whole group to recognized sources of information in libraries or elsewhere, perhaps by asking certain members to investigate and ascertain the facts as to certain points, perhaps by asking some properly qualified expert to come to the group at the next meeting prepared to answer questions of fact (not to express feelings or take sides in the discussion). In other words, he is to be used as a personalized encyclopedia.

Then, when questions of fact have been cleared up, differences of viewpoint are frankly stated and fully explored. The reasons for each are stated and all make an effort to enter into the purposes and appreciate the values which each ex-

pressed viewpoint seeks to conserve. The aim is understanding, not argument; light, not heat. Whenever a viewpoint thus expressed is found to rest upon an assumed fact, the correctness of which may be doubtful, further consideration of the viewpoint is deferred until the assumed fact can be investigated and verified or disproved. By this process of persistently separating facts from feelings, verifying the facts and understanding the feeling, the points of real difference are steadily reduced until finally it becomes possible to work out a solution of the practical problem which will be in accord with the facts agreed upon and will take account of all the values which the representatives of the various viewpoints feel should be conserved. Whenever an apparent impasse is arrived at, through the expression of radically different viewpoints and feelings, the question is asked *"Why* do you feel thus about this? On what facts are your feelings based?" Thus the ultimate conclusion arrived at through group discussion does not represent a victory of one viewpoint over another or an attempt to coerce the minority into coöperating with the majority in the policy decided upon. Rather, it represents a persistent process of sifting out facts from feelings, the verifying of the facts, and the checking of the feelings by the facts, on which they are supposedly based—until finally it is possible to arrive at a solution which is based upon the sum total of the facts and a synthesis of the viewpoints represented. Thus it becomes possible to enlist the cooperation of all, because the viewpoints of all have been taken into account.

(4) *It is the most effective way to develop men and women.* Ability to think clearly, persistently, and impartially, to discriminate between fact and opinion or prejudice, to respect fully the opinions of others even in matters where we have convictions, and to coöperate with others in reaching a common viewpoint—all of these qualities so desirable in every way and so necessary in life today can be developed only through practice. In addition to the value of the particular conclusion reached or problem solved the practice of thinking things through to a

conclusion is in itself of great value. Thus we can develop truly educated men and women, capable of assuming the direction of their own lives and of coöperating with others in solving common problems.

III. HOW

1. *Necessary conditions.*

There are certain conditions prerequisite to true group thinking:

(a) *There must be a question growing out of a real life situation and demanding decision.* This supplies the necessary motive. A discussion of a question of purely academic interest, entirely unrelated to life and without any vital importance to any one person, is apt to become a mere intellectual diversion and will not be engaged in with the serious purpose characteristic of true group thinking. It does not present what Professor James would call a "live option."

This does not mean that the problem must necessarily be one which requires overt action on the part of the group or any of its members—although problems which relate to actual conduct ordinarily form the ideal type of discussion material. It is, however, conceivable that a person or a group might have become so intensely interested in a particular subject outside of their field of personal action that they feel under a kind of necessity to learn the facts and form an opinion about the problem involved. This felt urgency in itself constitutes a life situation for them, and so this type of problem is not really an exception to the rule.

For example, a certain group of persons, who had from childhood accepted without question the traditional theories of the authorship of biblical books might have become so disturbed in their minds by hearing that scholars today believe that the book of Isaiah is a composite literary production of two or more authors that they could not rest until they had come to some conclusion one way or the other about it. Of

course this does not present them with a problem demanding action. No matter how many Isaiahs there might be, there is nothing in particular that this class could do about it. But for the sake of their own peace of mind they need to solve the problem of how to reconcile such a theory, if true, with their belief in the inspiration and authority of Holy Scripture. That is a very real life problem and under the circumstances might well form the subject for a discussion group.

(b) *The group must seek to come to a conclusion.* The ever-present danger in a discussion group, especially one that has not had much practice, is to be content with merely talking over the situation, perhaps learning some interesting facts and expressing their feelings or prejudices, but not "getting anywhere." The necessity of reaching a conclusion must be kept ever before the group and used to bring them back if they digress into mere rambling conversation or debate. A discussion group has failed in its purpose unless it has come to a conclusion, and the degree of its success is measured by whether all or at least nearly all of its members wholeheartedly concur in the conclusion finally reached.

(c) *The group must plan to carry out the decision or conclusion reached.* If it is one of the exceptional cases described above, where the object is the clarifying of their own minds on a subject of vital importance to them, there is not the same necessity for "carrying out" the decision reached—and yet there is a need even here. For example, in the illustration given, if they conclude that the traditional opinion which they have held on the subject of Scriptural authorship or inspiration should be modified or perhaps radically changed, then the practical question comes up as to whether they should attempt to bring others (their children, their Sunday School pupils, or others) to these new opinions. If the failure to gain the new point of view heretofore has caused them serious religious perplexity, do they not owe it to the younger generation to prevent their having to pass through the same trouble? So, even with what might seem at first sight to be merely personal intellectual prob-

lems, there will very likely emerge some challenge to action, some occasion to consider "What shall we do about it?"

2. *The leader's preparation.*

Some may think at first that the leadership of a discussion group, since it does not involve a connected and systematic presentation of the topic in lecture form, does not require as much preparation on the part of the leader. In a sense this is true, but from another standpoint the leadership of a discussion group demands even more from the leader.

For one thing, it is essential that he make an outline (as suggested below) for the conduct of the discussion. This outline when elaborated for actual use will require some knowledge of the factors and possibilities involved in the problem. While the elaborations will naturally be brought out by the members of the group, still the leader will have to understand clearly the nature of the problem in order when necessary to help the members in stating their point, and to make sure that nothing is omitted. In avoiding duplications of statement in slightly different words, in distinguishing between facts and opinions or feelings, and sometimes by suggesting some fact or viewpoint omitted by oversight, the leader will have occasion to use whatever knowledge of the subject he may possess or be able to secure.

Again, the leader should know something about possible sources of information as to facts—either in the form of library references or available experts. Most of all the leader will need to train himself continually in the method and spirit in which the group should be conducted—the habit of perfect fairness and impartiality in all statements, discrimination between essentials and non-essentials in statements made by others, methods of drawing out the backward and restraining the overtalkative, etc. Most of those who have tried both methods will agree that the proper handling of a discussion group makes more exacting demands upon them than the giving of a lecture or the conducting of a recitation of the ordinary type.

3. *The discussion outline.*

In preparation for the discussion and in conducting the sessions the leader will need an outline. *The Process of Group Thinking,* by H. S. Elliott (to which we are indebted for many of the suggestions in this chapter) is the standard treatise on this subject and is indispensable to anyone who wishes to adopt this method. The outline below is suggested by Professor Elliott—the material under these points as they are used by the group is, of course, to be brought out in the discussion.

(a) *Exploring the situation.*

(1) *The question to be decided.* The first thing to be done is to draw out from the group an exact statement of the question to be decided or the problem to be solved, and this is to be stated as clearly and precisely as possible, without any unnecessary words. A suggested statement of the question by a member of the group may be put on the blackboard and criticisms or modifications in the statement be invited from others.

(2) *The factors to be considered.* This will be in the nature of an analysis of what is involved in the question. For example, suppose the question is "Should we admit a Chinese girl into membership in our class?" Among the factors involved are the effect upon the Chinese girl's attitude toward Christianity if she is refused, the probability of this leading to the admission of a large number of other Chinese into the school and the reaction of the present members to this, the teaching of Christianity as to race relations, the possibility of helping this girl, and the attitude of their parents toward it. Every real and important factor should be listed.

(b) *Searching for a solution.*

(1) *List the possibilities.* Having clearly stated the problem to be solved and called attention to the factors involved which make it a real problem, the next step is to let the members of the group mention various possibilities of action. In the

illustration given, some of the possibilities would be: (a) To refuse to let her into the class; (b) To ask the superintendent to place her in some other class; (c) To admit her but give her the cold shoulder so that she would soon drop out; (d) To receive her into the class for its Sunday morning session, but ignore her in their social gatherings; (e) To receive her unreservedly.

Care should be taken to include all possible solutions that may occur to members of the group, either at the beginning or later. Many times it helps (especially in a large group) to have both the original question and the various possibilities stated impersonally and in general terms. If it is a question of personal habit or conduct, it is well both in stating the question and in discussing possibilities to state them in the third person rather than the first. It is also desirable in stating the various possibilities of action to indicate at least briefly the reasons for each one—but to do this impersonally, as "those who favor this plan would urge" etc., rather than as expressions of personal feeling or opinion on the part of the speaker.

(2) *Summarize the agreements.* At this stage it is well to agree upon a statement covering the points on which the group is already agreed—as to purpose and ideals and as to facts. If the class (in the illustration above) is agreed that the first purpose of the class is to be a congenial social unit in the parish, this will doubtless shorten the discussion of the question. Or again, if they are agreed that the purpose of the whole Church and Church School is to exert a Christian influence over as many people as possible, this again will contribute toward reaching a decision on the specific point. As to the facts in this case, there would be the question of racial differences, the "yellow peril," the possibility of a large number of others wanting to come into the class, etc. It should be possible to agree upon at least some of the facts involved before going further.

(3) *Consider the differences*—differences as to facts and differences in the viewpoints, feelings, prejudices. It will usually be found that while there is agreement as to some facts, there

are others on which there is not at the start an agreement. These facts or supposed facts should then be set forth for investigation —perhaps on the basis of information that can be immediately obtained from the class, but more likely on the basis of information to be secured by the members of the class from the library and other sources, or by securing a visit to the class by some recognized authority in this line.

The differences as to viewpoint will perhaps be less easy to dispose of. But they should be stated and stated frankly. A viewpoint, even a narrow and prejudiced one, which is not fully expressed but is suppressed and ignored, will be certain to make trouble later. But as these emotional attitudes and desires are revealed, they should be cross-examined. The question "Why?" should be continually asked. This will bring us back to the facts again and afford an opportunity for another assignment or some other effort to enlarge the fund of exact information.

(4) *Reach a conclusion.* The goal of the discussion is the conclusion, and unless this is reached it has failed of its full purpose. The question answered in the conclusion should ordinarily be not *which* of the various solutions shall be adopted, for it is rarely possible to bring all the members of the group to accept the views of some one member, giving up their own. Rather, it should be *what* can be done that will be in accord with the facts and recognize all the values which the various members of the group are seeking to conserve.

The discussion should have been carried on to the point where the factual basis (or lack of basis) of each viewpoint represented shall have been discovered, and where all members of the group are willing to recognize and conserve all the viewpoints that have been found to have a valid basis in fact. This, of course, will usually mean the working out of some solution which is at least in part new and therefore capable of including all these values, rather than the adoption of a viewpoint representing only part of the group. In other words, the ideal conclusion is not a victory of one side over another, for "a man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still." Neither

is it a bargaining compromise between sides, which is apt to leave the question in a state of unstable equilibrium. Rather, it should be such a synthesis as will be felt by all to have recognized their viewpoint so far as it was founded upon facts, and to have conserved the values which meant so much to them.

In practice, there will naturally be times when the group either owing to imperfect leadership, insufficient information, or lack of patience, may not be able to arrive at a perfectly satisfactory solution, but the inclusive viewpoint is what should be persistently sought.

(5) *Plan to carry out the decision.* In practically all cases there is something that should be *done* about the decision reached. Even if it is only the agreement upon a new point of view in an important matter, the group should consider how this point of view can be made effective with themselves and what if anything they should do to bring it to the attention of others. Ordinarily, groups will consider questions of practical Christian living in which there is obviously a need for determining what should be done either individually or by the group to carry into effect the conclusion reached. The bane of most religious gatherings is the passing of a resolution or the adoption of a "finding" without planning specifically for carrying these into effect. Someone has called attention to the fact that in the Bible there is no "Book of Resolutions" but only a "Book of Acts." Therefore, after the conclusion has been fully agreed upon, ways and means of carrying it into effect should be considered and considered with equal care.

4. *Conducting the Discussion.*

(a) *Arranging the setting:* A discussion group should never be conducted in a formal class-room with fixed seats. It should be made as informal as possible—more like a conversational group in a home or club. The chairs should be arranged in a circle or horseshoe shape. If they can focus on a cheery fire, so much the better. The members should remain seated while speaking, although of course careful not to interrupt one another

or to carry on individual conversation while others are speaking. Parliamentary motions should be avoided.

(b) *Securing information.* From time to time during the discussion questions of fact will come up on which the members of the group need additional information. Sometimes this information can be supplied by the leader or by some of the members, but often it will require outside investigation. The leader may ask a certain member to look up certain statistical data or to consult libraries and report back to the group. This is satisfactory where the question of fact involved is simple and definite and not susceptible of varying interpretation. On the other hand, where considerable information is to be secured or where the information desired depends upon summarizing and interpreting data, it will be well to ask all the members of the group as far as practicable to look into it, so that there may be no question as to the correctness of the statement finally brought to the class. A third plan is to call upon some expert to attend the next session of the group, prepared to answer questions upon specific points.

(c) *Summarizing the progress made.* Progress will be made and needless repetition avoided if the leader will from time to time summarize clearly but concisely the point to which the discussion has progressed. For example, after the possible solutions have been listed, he may summarize (preferably on a blackboard where it will remain before the group for reference and as a reminder) the points on which the group is agreed as to the facts and their own common purpose or viewpoint. He may afterward summarize the points at which there is disagreement as to the facts, and also the differences in viewpoint.

And not only at these stated intervals but throughout the discussion, whenever sufficient ground has been covered or there seems to be any tendency to repetition, it will be well for him to summarize briefly the progress made so far and call attention to the desirability of concentrating their attention on the points yet to be settled.

It is to be remembered that the summary must be absolutely matter of fact—not exhortation. And it should not be put in the form of a parliamentary motion. Parliamentary devices are essentially the rules of a game, an intellectual prize-fight, and this is what group discussion emphatically is not.

(d) *Securing coöperation.* Securing the full coöperation of all members of the group is essential to effective group discussion, and it is not always easy to accomplish. The following general suggestions are offered:

(1) *Encourage minorities.* Minority groups or individuals are sometimes hesitant and backward about expressing their views. They should be led out, for only so can there be any possibility of reaching a conclusion which will include them.

(2) *Restrain digressions.* In every group there is apt to be someone who is over-talkative or who lacks the ability to stick to the point. The group as a whole may show a tendency to digress from the real subject under consideration and sometimes talk at random about some other topic suggested by something in the discussion. While the leader should show patience with those who find it difficult to come directly to the point, he should carefully guard the group from having its time taken up with irrelevant matters.

(3) *Draw out the backward.* Frequently there are individuals who are naturally timid or hesitant about expressing themselves. They may have some thought of real value to the group but prefer to listen to the expressions of others. These should be led out, if necessary, by calling on them by name.

(4) *The chairman's attitude.* The chief factor in securing cooperation and, in fact, the chief factor in the success of the whole plan is the attitude of the chairman. He should be mentally alert, quick to catch the significance of statements, absolutely impartial, self-restrained (not yielding to the temptation of talking too much himself), and above all have abundant patience. This may be difficult for him, especially if he is a person of very strong convictions or one who is himself quick-witted and accustomed to lucid statements. He may find it hard to receive sympathetically and patiently the expression of views which he considers obviously and seriously wrong. He may not find it easy to listen patiently to some member who does not know how to express clearly just what he means or who takes too much time in stating his viewpoints. In all these matters, however, the chairman must be patient, sympathetic, and tactful. He must be in the fullest sense of the word a Christian in order to lead a discussion group in a Christian way.

When the leader maintains this attitude, and follows carefully the simple principles that have been found by experience to be fundamental to success, he will find in this method an effective and practical plan for developing coöperative Christian thinking and Christian living.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Elliott, *The Process of Group Thinking* (Fundamental and indispensable).
Elliott, *Group Discussion in Religious Education.*
Sheffield, *Creative Discussion.*

CHAPTER NINE

The Use of Biblical Material in the Curriculum of Religious Education

The sources of material for the curriculum of religious education are as many and as varied as the experiences of life itself. Human relationships, the experiences of every-day life, literature (both prose and poetry), the discoveries of science, and the achievements of missionary enterprise, the records of history and biography, and the religious classics of the ages, especially the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer, are among the chief sources.

Among these, the Bible occupies a unique place and one of the questions that is sure to come up in any consideration of the new type of curriculum is as to whether the Bible will retain this preëminence; if so, how, and if not, why not. Therefore, while it would not be feasible to discuss all the types of material to be used for religious education, it is necessary to consider briefly the place of the Bible in the new conception of the curriculum.

Stated in a sentence, the Bible will still retain a preëminent place; indeed, it would be difficult to conceive of any reasoned plan for religious education which would not accord a commanding place to the Bible; but in the new curriculum the approach to the Bible will be in some respects different from what has prevailed in the past and the purpose and method of using it will also differ. Let it be noted here that much of the present teaching of the Bible has been essentially from the point of view that we shall here set forth, but this attitude has not been universal or perhaps even general.

I. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

We may best consider this under four general principles, as follows:

(1) *Biblical material is to be used because of its inherent religious and ethical value, and not merely because it is found in the Bible. The selection of the material and the method and extent of its use are to be determined from this standpoint.*

The earliest Sunday Schools in this country, as soon as they had progressed beyond the purely catechetical type of teaching, began to make the memorization of Bible verses the central and almost exclusive content of their curriculum. In some cases hundreds of verses were learned weekly; different colored tickets (as described in *Tom Sawyer*) were awarded according to the number of verses recited, and prizes were given to those who could recite from memory a thousand or more verses. These verses were selected without any regard to their ethical or religious value or indeed to their significance in any way. Jewish genealogies were equally acceptable with the Sermon on the Mount; it was entirely immaterial whether the pupil understood their meaning or gained any religious impression from them. All that was necessary was to recite verbatim a certain number of Bible verses. (For a detailed account of this period in the history of the curriculum, see chapter five of *The Curriculum of Religious Education,* by Betts.)

Protestants frequently censure Roman Catholics for saying their prayers in Latin or for telling the beads of the rosary. But the blind memorizing of Bible verses with no understanding or appreciation of their meaning (and oftentimes when they had no religious meaning) is certainly no less open to criticism religiously as well as educationally.

The next stage in the development of the curriculum was the study of connected Bible passages in historical sequence, by the entire school, regardless of the adaptability of the passage to the understanding of the pupil at a given age and with very slight regard to its inherent religious value. There was a tacit assumption that if a historical event was recorded in the Bible

it became thereby suitable material for religious education, whereas a similar event taken from any other source was secular history and unsuited for religious use—even though, considered in itself, it might seem to afford better material for religious and moral lessons.

When the International Graded Lessons were promulgated in 1908 there was a violent objection in some quarters because they contained some "extra-biblical material" in the form of nature lessons (attached, however, to a Scripture text), and lives of great missionaries. In other words, the assumption of this point of view was that material taken from the Bible was *ipso facto* of religious value and suitable for use in religious education, while material from any other sources was necessarily "secular" and consequently not suitable for use in religious education. The determining factor was the source of the material and not its character.

The new viewpoint in religious education sets itself squarely against this assumption and holds on the contrary that the availability of any particular bit of subject matter for religious education is determined by what it is and what it teaches religiously and morally—not by the date it was written or the book from which it was taken. As a matter of fact the Bible (Old Testament as well as New Testament) does contain the finest kind and largest proportion of source material capable of being effectively used in Christian religious education.

The Bible will always retain its preëminent place in Christian religious education, not because it is the Bible but because it is inherently of supreme religious worth. But this does not mean that every part of the Bible is of greater value for religious education than anything in all other literature. Every Christian instinctively recognizes this fact, for whatever may be his views as to the nature and extent of Scriptural inspiration, there are large areas of the Bible which he practically never reads, while there are other portions, such as the Book of Psalms, and much of the prophets and epistles,

which are constantly read and re-read as being perennial founts of inspiration to him.

The practical consequence of this principle is that in the approach to the curriculum we ask, not "What is in the Bible and how we can impart a knowledge of it to the pupil?" but rather, "What religious objectives do we wish to attain in the life of the pupil, and what material, biblical and other, can we most effectively use for this purpose?" If, for example, our particular objective is to foster a spirit of world-brotherhood and to discourage race prejudice, there are passages of secular literature which would be more effective than the story of Esther in the Bible.

Having said this, however, we must add that in proportion to the teacher's understanding of the Bible will be his ability to find in the Bible that which will best serve to illustrate and impress a given religious truth. The chief danger with our teachers at present is not that they will use the Bible too much when something else would be better adapted, but that through lack of knowledge and understanding of the Bible they will neglect its incomparable treasures. For some years past we have been emphasizing in our training courses a knowledge of method, and this is well; but after some experience in summer schools and in conferences with many parish teachers, the writer is convinced that one of the most urgent needs of today is for a greater familiarity with the actual contents of the Bible on the part of the teachers in all departments of the Church School.

In accordance with this general principle, the curriculum-making bodies, whether national or parochial, after determining the general and specific objectives to be attained, are to seek for the best material to be used for that purpose, looking first to the Bible as our great religious classic and source book of religious truth revealed through human experience, and then to other literature and the various sources suggested at the beginning of this chapter, and finally selecting from among all the possibly usable material that which will be actually most effective in the attainment of the desired objective.

(2) *Our use of the Scriptures in teaching should be reverent, sincere, and in accord with sound biblical scholarship.*

This is a plea for intellectual honesty in religion—that the teacher should not teach that which he does not believe. Increasingly well informed Christians are realizing that some of the conceptions as to the mode and extent of inspiration which they inherited from their parents or from early environment are not in accord with the facts as ascertained by reverent Christian scholarship of today. The assumption, for example, of the literal inerrancy and infallibility of the Bible on all subjects, science and history as well as religion and morals, is no longer generally held by educated Christians. Indeed, it was never a dogma of the Church Universal or of our own branch of the Church.

Again, we have learned that many of the traditional ascriptions of authorship in the Bible are without historical foundation and that books supposedly written by one man are in reality compilations from several sources; that the Old Testament contains much oral tradition and tribal legend, as well as documented history, and that consequently a distinction between these should be made; that the representations of historical events are oftentimes colored by the presuppositions of the writer, and that some extraordinary happenings, interpreted in terms which represented the best thought of that age, would be differently interpreted if they happened today.

All of these are commonplaces among biblical scholars and are doubtless familiar facts to many of our Church School teachers. Those who are not familiar with these facts should, under the guidance of their rector, become informed as to the general conclusions of sound historical scholarship through reading such books as, for example: *The Bible in the Making* and *How God Inspired the Bible,* by J. Paterson-Smyth; *The Bible, Its Origin, Significance, and Abiding Worth,* by A. S. Peake; *A Biblical Thoroughfare,* by Talbot; *How to Know the Bible,* by Hodges; *The Doctrine of the Infallible Book,* by Bishop Gore; and *The Modern Use of the Bible,* by Fosdick.

Those who are already familiar with these facts should take them into account in their teaching of the Bible to the young people under their charge. The object, of course, is not to make biblical critics of them but to give them a fuller understanding and therefore a higher appreciation of the Scriptures, and especially to prevent the almost inevitable shaking of their faith in college and later life if they grow up assuming, as fundamental Christian doctrines, positions which practically all well-informed people today have discarded.

The worst enemy of the Christian faith is the one who leads young people to accept views which their later knowledge will almost certainly force them to discard, for in so doing they are apt to throw overboard their Christian faith as well.

In the teaching of the Bible there is ordinarily no occasion to discuss formally the modern viewpoint as such; rather, it should be assumed throughout as a matter of course. If questions are asked, the teacher should show how this viewpoint enlarges our understanding and appreciation of the Bible and of the operation of God in human history.

The teacher is responsible for showing by his own reverent appreciation of and evident familiarity with the Bible, that the acceptance of the modern viewpoint does not diminish but rather increases our intelligent faith in the Scriptures, as being given by moral inspiration rather than by mechanical dictation.

One practical suggestion may be offered here. In teaching little children, especially those of kindergarten or early primary age, the question of literal historicity does not ordinarily enter into the story, and the teacher should tell it as a story. A little later, when the distinction between fact and fancy begins to be made, the teacher may when necessary preface her story by saying, "Here is a story which has been told among the Hebrew children for many hundreds of years—so long indeed that we do not know now how much of it is actual fact and how much of it due to the imagination of the story tellers through all these centuries." Perhaps a little later still as the child becomes

more insistent for historic fact and at the same time is becoming capable of appreciating more fully the moral issues involved in the story, she may explain, "This is a story which, while it may never have happened in just this way, does give us a very true picture of life then and now."

(3) *The Bible is to be presented as the record of a progressive Divine revelation through human experience.*

There is little need to elaborate this statement. The Bible is the *record* of a revelation, rather than the revelation itself. It is the record of a progressive revelation, imperfect in its earlier stages as recorded in the Old Testament, but completed and interpreted by the revelation given by our Lord Jesus Christ through His life and teachings. We should carefully guard against the tendency on the part of many to assume that the words and actions of Old Testament characters and their interpretations of God's will are necessarily authoritative for us today, living in the full light of the Christian revelation. Abraham's interpretation of God's command to offer Isaac, David's treatment of his enemies, Elisha's and Elijah's treatment of those who opposed them, are not necessarily to be defended by the teacher as being in all respects right or admirable—and yet neither are these noble pioneers to be condemned for their falling short of Christian standards while living up to and beyond the standards of their own day.

Yet the divine initiative in revelation is not to be overlooked or minimized in our teaching. The natural reaction from the former over-emphasis upon the divine factor to the practical exclusion of the human element is to attribute all to the human and forget the divine. In religion, revelation and discovery are correlatives. What God reveals man discovers and what man discovers God reveals. God reveals Himself through our discovery of Him. And this revelation as recorded in Scripture is a revelation through the religious experience of human beings—not by the mere passive reception of miraculously dictated words. The Bible is a record of man's experience of

God's revelation. God reveals Himself in and through men—that is inspiration; men recorded this experience as best they could—that is Scripture.

(4) *We should lead the pupils to form the habit of using the Bible as a source book of religious inspiration and guidance and expression.*

Our aim should be to cultivate in the pupils the habit of Bible reading and Bible study, not as a religious duty but as a spiritual privilege. The Bible should come to them as the answer to a felt need in their lives. They should look upon it not as the college student looks upon his assigned readings—as something which must be done because required in the course but which has no very direct inherent value to him—but rather as the Boy Scout looks upon his Boy Scout Handbook as containing the very information that he needs; or as the ambitious youth reads the lives of successful men, firing himself with ambition to emulate them; or as the artist gazes upon the marbles of ancient Greece for inspiration and for ideals of achievement.

The reading of the Bible should never be presented as a task or as a duty—except in the sense that it is the duty of all of us to keep ourselves persistently in the presence of the best and to take advantage of every opportunity for self-development. Rather, the teacher should present the Bible as containing the answer to the felt needs of human life—the need for encouragement, inspiration, comfort, and warning. Looking at it thus and using it to meet their life needs, they will come to find in it the choicest material for the expression of their own spiritual longings and aspirations. It will become to them the language of devotion and of worship as well as the stimulating atmosphere for noble living.

In this connection, it is perhaps needless to say that at some time in the curriculum of religious education there should be given to the pupils of the Church School an elementary knowledge of the make-up of the Bible, its contents, its origin and history, its inspiration, and spiritual authority. This will con-

tribute to its more intelligent and effective use as a book of devotion and inspiration.

II. SPECIFIC METHODS

There are five ways in which biblical material may be used in religious education:

(1) *To illustrate and impress religious truths.*

The story of how God cared for the Baby Moses, when told to the little child, illustrates and impresses the truth of God's loving care for His children today and naturally leads to a response of love, trust, and gratitude. The story of Jesus blessing little children illustrates and impresses the truth of His love for children. The story of the little captive maid (II Kings 5), or of Jesus feeding the five thousand from the lunch of the little boy, illustrates how even a child may help God.

Bible stories should not have a moral "tacked on" at the end. Neither should they be dragged into the lesson—they should spring naturally from what has gone before in story, conversation, play, or the incidents of every-day life. While the Bible is preëminently rich in illustrative material of this sort, the teacher should not feel under any obligation to use a Bible story when some other story will better illustrate the truth. Our Lord in His teaching, while making large use of Scripture, did not by any means limit Himself to biblical material; He took His stories and illustrations very largely from every-day life. And so may the teacher today, following in His footsteps.

(2) *To formulate religious principles.*

Partly because of their inherent merit, partly because they have become a part of the literary heritage of English-speaking peoples, the biblical formulations of moral and religious truth are of exceptional potency and pedagogic value. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," "Righteousness exalteth

a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people," "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them," "Judge not, that ye be not judged," are expressions of eternal moral truths and ethical ideals which can never be superseded or improved upon. The Bible is a rich storehouse of spiritual wisdom, and this is true irrespective of our particular views of its inspiration and authority. The teacher (or parent) who fails to enrich the minds of the children from this treasure is guilty of criminal neglect.

(3) *To afford material for private devotion and public worship.*

Our prayers and our devotional life are oftentimes impoverished for lack of an adequate religious vocabulary. But to one who has lived in an atmosphere of the devotional literature of the Old and the New Testaments there is never any lack of words to express the inmost longings of the soul. And in the worship services of the Church School (to say nothing of the Church) if we go beyond a merely stereotyped "opening service" of collects selected at random from the Prayer Book, we shall feel the need of Scriptural material. Where young people occasionally prepare a service of worship for their department (as they may well do) they are ordinarily greatly handicapped by the lack of familiarity with sources of devotional material. This lack can be supplied only through early and systematic familiarity with biblical material.

(4) *To present the life, teachings, and personality of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Irrespective of theological dogma, it is a self-evident fact of history that the Christian religion is centered in the personality of its Founder and no program of religious education can justly claim to be Christian unless it secures a reasonable degree of familiarity with the story of Jesus as given in the Gospels—His deeds, His character, His person. So far as any "subject" may be so designated, this may well be given a central place in the curriculum of instruction.

(5) *To trace the hand of God in human history.*

While we would not limit the operation of divine Providence to the history of the Hebrews, nevertheless it is historically true that they above any other nation possessed the gift of interpreting their own history from the standpoint of the divine Power which makes for righteousness. As we study the history of Greece and Rome, we can dimly see through the mist of centuries a divine meaning in an event here and there; but as we read the history of the Hebrews as recorded by themselves, we are as it were in the presence of God working among them. Irrespective of our conception of the inspiration of the Old Testament, it is a fact of history, as has been so often pointed out, that the Hebrews had a divinely-given genius for religion and morals, as the Greeks had for philosophy and art, and the Romans had for law and government.

From the foregoing it will be seen that in the new religious education the Bible not only retains its place as our chief religious source book, but is used even more effectively because more intelligently, more religiously because less mechanically.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

In addition to the books named in the text, the following are suggested:

Barbour, *Making the Bible Desired.*
Streibert, *Youth and the Bible.*
Selleck, *The New Appreciation of the Bible.*
Booth, *The Background of the Bible.*

CHAPTER TEN

Education in World-Friendship

I. WHAT

For many years past there has been a growing appreciation of the importance of what has been called, heretofore, "missionary education" in the Sunday School, but which is now known as "education in world-friendship" and is recognized as an integral part or aspect of general religious education. Scores if not hundreds of volumes have been written on this subject from the older point of view (*i.e.,* regarding "missionary education" as something separate and distinct, added to the regular curriculum), and thousands of leaflets and special day programs for this purpose have been prepared. The initiation of this development came largely from those who were especially interested in the promotion of the foreign missionary movement in the various Churches and it was at first looked upon primarily if not altogether as a means of developing a more adequate support in finance and personnel for the missionary work of the Church. The educational effect upon the character and conduct of the pupil was scarcely considered—and for this reason the older methods, no matter what form they took, proved relatively ineffective.

In some cases this older form of missionary instruction took the form of a special appeal to the school or the Church by a visiting missionary or a representative of a missionary board, with the object of so informing their minds and stirring their feelings as to secure a large collection for missions. Later there was gradually developed in many denominations the plan of having a special missionary day once a quarter, with a

special lesson for the day—usually a Scripture passage selected because of its bearing, real or supposed, upon the missionary principle. Sometimes a special program was provided by denominational Sunday School boards for use on this day. The emphasis still was on the idea of so presenting the need, the urgency, and the value of the missionary enterprise that it would result in a liberal contribution either on that day or as a regular habit. In the books and pamphlets giving material for such programs and lessons, vivid pictures were drawn of the poverty, ignorance, suffering, and wickedness of non-Christian people, and statistics were given showing the dearth of Christian missionaries in various fields.

A development of this plan in some Sunday Schools was the appointment of a "missionary committee" responsible for bringing in a five-minute missionary program (story, statistics, picture, dialogue, or what-not) once a month—of course unrelated to the lessons taught in the various classes on that day.

Still another plan was the provision of a "missionary application of the lesson" for each lesson, carried regularly by Sunday School periodicals, in which some fact, incident, or illustration drawn from the mission field and related in some way to some fact or statement in the lesson of the day, was provided for use by the teacher as a part of the lesson exposition.

Another plan, which is used quite generally in the Episcopal Church, is that of having a brief talk on some subject related to the missionary work of the Church on each Sunday during Lent, the object (at least in the minds of many local Sunday School leaders) being frankly that of stimulating the Lenten offering. While we would not wish to condemn this motive or method, still it must be said that this alone does not constitute an adequate program of missionary education.

A step in advance over the old method was taken when it was realized the sporadic efforts and unrelated material of this sort, especially if used chiefly to increase a missionary collection, would not give the best results. The next step was the

provision of special courses and text books on the missionary work of the Church in various fields. In the International Graded Lessons, for example, there are several months in certain departments given to the study of missions, especially in the form of missionary biography. The inspirational value of biographical study was thus recognized and utilized and it has materially enriched the curriculum. In the present Christian Nurture Series certain courses consist largely of a study of the Church's missionary work, past and present, at home and abroad.

Another plan was the development of mission study groups outside of the Sunday School, taking an eight or twelve weeks' course in the study of missions in some particular field. A wonderfully comprehensive and on the whole well prepared set of text books of this character has been provided by the Missionary Education Movement and other organizations. They are well written, inexpensive, and widely used.

Both of these latter plans—courses on missions in the Church School and outside courses on missionary work—have proved quite helpful and are a great improvement over the old plan, partly because they appeal to the intelligence rather than merely to the emotions of the moment, and partly because they seek to give a knowledge which may be the foundation of later appeals, rather than to stimulate the emotions to the point of making a substantial contribution at the time.

In all these, however, the chief emphasis is on imparting a knowledge of certain facts with (in many cases) an appeal to the emotions. No opportunity is given for actual participation in missionary work except through the giving of money, which in many cases is not in reality a gift from the child at all.

The modern conception of missionary education, on the other hand, is to lead the pupil into experiencing for himself the attitudes and purposes which are at the heart of the missionary purpose of the Church, through sharing in activities which are expressive of these attitudes; not simply knowing

certain facts about strange peoples of other lands, but having a brotherly attitude toward all men, near and far; not merely contributing through the missionary offering but personally engaging in enterprises of kindly helpfulness to others regardless of race or nationality or social status. The true objective in missionary education (which we now call by preference "education in world-friendship") is not a missionary gift but a missionary person. "The objective must always be stated in terms of pupil development; not what is to be taught to the pupil, but into what manner of personality the child is to grow." (Jean Gertrude Hutton, in *The Missionary Education of Juniors.*) "The aim of missionary education is to develop Christians who shall be intelligently devoted to the extension of Christ's Kingdom throughout the world and throughout all the areas of human thought and action." (Adapted from Herbert Wright Gates in *Missionary Education in the Church.*) "The guiding principle will be that of helping boys and girls to live as Christian boys and girls with members of other races and nationalities, both in their own communities and in the larger community, the world." (Jean Gertrude Hutton, *op. cit.*)

II. WHY

Although no one in these days is likely to question the propriety of making the Church School curriculum missionary, in the deepest sense, in character and spirit, it is nevertheless worth while for us to remind ourselves of the real reasons for doing so. It may prevent us from drifting into a perfunctory attitude toward it, and may help us to realize something of its fundamental importance and central place in the Christian program.

(1) *The attitude of world-friendship is central in the Christian religion and should therefore be central in Christian religious education.*

It should be remembered that by this phrase "world-friendship" we refer not merely to preaching the Gospel to heathen

nations in other continents, but to every effort to spread the Christian religion in every land and among people of every race and nationality, both at home and abroad; and also the endeavor to make the Spirit of Christ dominant throughout all the areas of human thought and action—social, industrial, economic, national, and international. It includes both the extensive and the intensive aspects of our work and is as much concerned with social justice in industry as with preaching-stations on the Congo. The impulse to share our Christian faith and life with others is a fundamental instinct in the normal Christian, and this is what we mean by the missionary spirit, or the attitude of world-friendship. And if the development of this attitude and the carrying out of this purpose are central in the purpose of Christ for the world, then certainly it should be made central in our Church program and our program of religious education.[2]

(2) *Adequate education in world-friendship will go far toward solving our social, industrial, international, and interracial problems.*

Most of our major problems of relationships between races are due either to a lack of sympathetic appreciation of one another or to a lack of the spirit and purpose of true brotherhood. If we can from earliest childhood so educate a generation that they will be free from racial, national, and class selfishness and prejudice, our problem will be solved.

(3) *Unless an attitude of world-friendship is cultivated in childhood it is difficult to acquire it later.*

Entirely aside from the fact that formal education usually ends with later adolescence and therefore, "whatever you would have appear in the life of the nation must first be put into the schools of the people" (Von Humboldt), there is the further fact that our racial prejudices, national hatreds, and class snobbishness are acquired, not innate, characteristics. The little child knows nothing of these; and if he could be kept away

[2] For a fuller development of this thought, see *The Church Awake,* by W. C. Sturgis.

from the influence of adults who have these attitudes, there is no reason to believe that he would ever develop them. But as it is, he very soon absorbs the attitudes implied by the tone and manner as well as the direct statements of his parents, and once these are acquired, reinforced as they are by parental sanction and social example in the community, it is exceedingly difficult to dislodge them.

III. HOW

(a) *General Principles.*

(1) *Education in world-friendship should be an integral part and inseparable aspect of general religious education.*

It should never become or be allowed to seem to be an optional extra tacked on to the regular curriculum. Many methods of missionary instruction in the past (described in section I above) have been open to this criticism. "Missions" is simply Christianity in action, and none of our lessons should be divorced from action. The impulse to share with others that which means most to us, and the Christian doctrine of the supreme value of human personality in God's sight, regardless of any external differences, are the basis of missionary education.

(2) *Education in world-friendship should include instruction, worship, service, and giving; and these should be wherever possible unified in a purposeful project, which is planned and executed by the class.*

Information acquired through instruction or investigation is always necessary as a basis for action or as setting a problem for consideration. The devotional response to this information is worship, in which we express our fellowship with God, with each other, and with those whom we seek to help. The practical expression of this attitude is found in acts of personal service and kindly helpfulness, and in gifts which express our friendly spirit and brotherly attitude toward them.

The ideally effective way of doing this is through a project undertaken by the class or a problem (growing out of a real life situation) brought before the class for discussion and ulti-

mate action. (The conclusions reached in the discussion of the problem may very readily lead into a project for the practical expression of the group's purpose.) This method has been described in earlier chapters of this book.

(3) *Education in world-friendship should begin with that which is near (in experience and comprehension and interest) and from that extend "unto the uttermost parts of the earth."*

The missionary spirit is essentially the spirit of world friendship, of interest in and desire to help and share with all others, regardless of race, nationality, or social status. It is said that some years ago in a border city in one of the southwestern states there were six classes studying a text book on missionary work in Mexico; but not a single member of any of those classes, nor anybody else in the churches of that city, could be found who was willing to teach Mexican children in that same city.

A child who goes out of his way to be kind and helpful to a foreign child at school is as truly giving to missions and expressing the missionary spirit as the one who makes a contribution to the Lenten offering. The little child may not be able to get a clear idea of the Church's missionary work in China; but he can understand what it means to be kind and helpful to the little Chinese boy or girl at school who is just as truly the object of the Heavenly Father's love as himself. "Nearness" to the child is not, however, a matter of geography only. It means primarily nearness in experience. The child-life of some land on the other side of the globe may be made so vividly real to the little child that it is far "nearer" to him psychologically than the administrative machinery of the national missionary headquarters of the Church in that same city.

(4) *The choice and use of materials should be such as to develop feelings of friendliness and respect rather than those of pity and condescension.* In other words the meaning of the phrase "missionary spirit" is best expressed by the words "world-friendship." It implies appreciation and respect for others and seeks to stress our common humanity rather than our incidental

differences. Above all, it seeks to avoid fostering national pride, race prejudice, or class consciousness. As stated above, these attitudes are not natural to children but may be absorbed very easily and very early from the environment at home and school. It is the duty of the Church School teacher, so far as possible, to forestall or to counteract such attitudes in her pupils; therefore (especially with the younger children) we should avoid stressing peculiarities, and especially the unattractive peculiarities, of other peoples and of other social classes in the same community. For the same reason it is easily possible to overdo in our description of the need or suffering to which we are seeking to minister. In all these presentations we should (a) avoid creating or emphasizing "class consciousness," either between races, nations, or social or economic groups; (b) avoid fostering an attitude of condescension toward others such as is suggested by some of the older types of missionary hymns (*e.g.*, the lines "The heathen in his blindness," "We whose souls are lighted with wisdom from on high," etc.); (c) avoid any undue strain upon the emotions of little children, through too vivid picturing of suffering on the part of others.

(5) *Appeal to and utilize the natural activity of the child.* They love to do things, and missionary projects which involve the doing or making of something for others will be especially welcome. The teacher should beware of mere "busy" work—occupations which have no adequate end outside of themselves; but if our missionary education can be centered around projects in which the child actively engages, they will be most effective.

(6) *Permit the pupil to exercise choice in enterprises, activities, and designation of gifts.* This is necessary if they are to develop into intelligently interested and spontaneously active Churchmen. One of the great needs of the Church now and at all times is for its members to become so interested in its missionary activities that they will inform themselves and then decide upon the amount and distribution of their contributions upon the basis of a knowledge of the needs rather than as a

merely passive and perhaps reluctant response to solicitation in the Every Member Canvass. And the way to develop this intelligent interest and activity is through practising it in childhood and youth. The amount given by the pupil is of far less significance than the formation of the habit of careful investigation and deliberate personal decision upon the basis of factual knowledge.

(b) *Departmental Methods.*

"Any activity which tends to strengthen the attitude and habit of unselfish friendliness toward all is good missionary education." The essence of the missionary spirit is the attitude of friendliness and readiness to share with others; therefore, from its earliest years this attitude should be cultivated in the child. Speaking of "missionary education" for children of kindergarten age Miss Jessie Moore says: "The way to teach missions is to make an ice-cream treat a family party." In other words, train the little child in the habit of instinctively sharing with others that which means most to him. Another statement of the same general principle but in broader terms is: "The curriculum of the Church School is in reality a set of graded experiments in social living. It is concerned with the relations between persons and consists of real doing of enterprises involving friendliness, helpfulness, and brotherhood." (Moore, *The Missionary Education of Beginners.*)

With the kindergarten and primary children especially it is important to remember that the primary place should be given to the expression of the spirit of world-friendship in actual service rather than to the repetition of memorized facts. "Modern thinking strongly emphasizes the fact that doing is not merely the end of the learning process but a part of the process itself" (Hutton). "One enterprise in friendship is more important than a year of text book lessons," as one writer says in reference to "missionary education" of kindergarten children. This tendency is quite in line with all sound educational practice today. We put our young people into a laboratory to learn

chemistry, we put our boys on a playground to learn baseball; how then can we expect them to learn the golden rule except by practising it, or to acquire an attitude of world friendship except through activities expressing that attitude? Whenever there is a need that children can meet they must be encouraged to act. We should watch for every manifestation of interest in others and encourage it. Thus we are utilizing what psychologists call the "parental instinct" in children as an opportunity for developing in them the true missionary spirit.

In children of kindergarten and primary age, the experiences of caring for pets, of helping other children, of sharing with others both in the home and out of it, afford an excellent background for developing the spirit and habit of world friendship. Gradually, as they grow older, they will become better and better able to enter into experiences of coöperative helpfulness to others both near and far.

As juniors (9 to 11 years old) they will have a keen interest in other children and other lands, and this will afford a good point of contact for interesting them in the work of the Church for the children of those lands. The junior has an insatiable hunger for facts, and now is the time to include a considerable amount of knowledge content in our program. Care should be taken that the stories told and the pictures shown to them do not repel by their emphasis upon differences, or develop in them a feeling of superiority.

In both the junior and the intermediate (junior high school) departments, biography will have a strong appeal. Missionary history is full of material of this sort, but care should be exercised in its selection. It is important to include among our missionary stories some stories of people still living; otherwise, the junior may think of missions as an event or epoch in ancient history instead of as an ongoing activity of the Church today. "To tell the story of a Walter Reed or of a Wilfred Grenfell is to give the junior a practical and vital idea of missions and of missionary living that has meaning now and for

the future, not merely a dead past in which he has been living." (Hutton, *op. cit.*) Curios from foreign lands are of great interest at this time, partly because of the natural collecting instinct of the junior; and a class or department missionary museum will be popular.

With pupils of senior high school age our program of education in world-friendship should stress the understanding and appreciation of other races and classes. Actual situations should be provided in which the boys and girls have a chance to share, to be helpful and brotherly. Real adventures in brotherliness will be planned. The development of brotherly attitudes and conduct and not the acquisition of mere knowledge should be the purpose of the curriculum. (Kerschner, *The Missionary Education of Intermediates.*) Problems of attitudes and relationships coming up in school and daily life will afford a good introduction to really vital education in world friendship. Excursions and tours of observation in the vicinity will frequently prove both interesting and informative.

Among young people of college age, a coöperative study and group discussion of such questions as the origin and validity of race prejudice, the distinctive teachings and comparative values of the various ethnic religions, the effects, good and bad, of the missionary enterprise in foreign lands, and the problems now confronting us in certain fields, will prove interesting and helpful.

Pageantry and informal dramatics will be especially popular if presented as a privilege and not as a task. Gifts of money, of personal service, and of life, can readily be made now. In gifts of money, three things are very important to remember: (1) It should be a real gift—taken from earnings or allowances; (2) It should be the expression of intelligent thought; the group should have investigated the proposed project and perhaps other needs in the Church as well and come to a group decision which should be respected by the teacher even if he does not fully agree with it. (3) Giving should be regular

and systematic and should be in proportion to their respective abilities.

In all these and other ways the Church School leader today seeks to impart information, develop attitudes and appreciations, and lead to action in the direction of the desired goal.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Diffendorfer, *Missionary Education in Home and School.*
Gates, *Missionary Education in the Church.*
Hutton, *The Missionary Education of Juniors.*
Kerschner, *The Missionary Education of Intermediates.*
Lobingier, *World Friendship in the Church School.*
Lobingier, *Projects in World Friendship.*
Moore, *The Missionary Education of Beginners.*
Stooker, *The Missionary Education of Primaries.*

(For books on special missionary fields, and for inspirational and source material, consult the publication lists of the Missionary Education Movement, and of the National Council of the Church.)

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Church as a School

Slight changes in phraseology sometimes connote profound changes in meaning. An interesting example of this is found in the field of religious education. As is well known, the Sunday School movement as initiated by Robert Raikes in 1780 had no direct relation to the Church. Indeed, it was of doubtful respectability religiously and Church leaders looked askance upon it. The Archbishop of Canterbury at one time called a conference to consider ways and means of putting a stop to the Sunday School movement and many churches refused to allow the use of their buildings for Sunday School purposes. So for some years the "Sunday School" was a thing separate and apart from the Church—the two institutions were rarely coupled together even in thought.

Later on, when the religious purpose and value of the Sunday School were recognized, the phrase "Church *and* Sunday School" was generally used to describe the two institutions and the relationship between them. This phrase, and the attitude connoted by it, represented the conception prevalent for two or three generations—more so, perhaps, in other communions than in our own.

Gradually it came to be recognized that the Sunday School was not, or at least ought not to be, a thing apart from the Church, an institution in its own right, but rather a function or activity of the Church, owing its existence to the Church and responsible to the Church for its work. This conception was crystallized and popularized in the definition of the Sunday School (given currency by Dr. Marion Lawrance, general secretary of the International Sunday School Association), "The

Sunday School is the Bible-studying and teaching service of the Church," and expressed concisely in the title of a book on Sunday School management by the late Dr. J. M. Frost, Sunday School editor of the Southern Baptist Convention, entitled *The School of the Church.* This is the generally accepted conception of it today; the Sunday School—or, if we think of it in broader terms as including week-day and vacation sessions and young people's societies, "the Church School"—is the agency to which the Church has delegated or through which the Church carries on its educational task; it is "the school *of* the Church." While it distinctly subordinates the school to the Church, it tremendously magnifies its task and responsibility. It is a noble and inspiring interpretation of the relationship between Church and school.

But are we not ready now for a still larger vision? Is not the *entire work* of the Church in the broadest sense educational? If education consists (as all modern educators hold) in the modification of character through experience, certainly the services of the Church, and participation in the organized work of the Church, should rank as educational activities, for their purpose is to influence character and develop personality. Therefore the Church itself, and not merely one subsidiary department or special service of it, is educational.

And so, while we shall maintain and develop certain agencies for carrying on certain specialized aspects of the educational program, we are to regard the whole work of the whole Church as being truly educational in spirit and purpose. In other words, we are to think not of "the Church *and* the School" or "the School *of* the Church," but of "the Church *as* a School"; and this will carry with it (as we shall see later) certain far-reaching implications.

It is interesting to note that this viewpoint combines our traditionally high conception of the nature and function of the Church with a thoroughly modern conception of the educational process. As Christians and as Churchmen we look upon the Church as being not a human organization but a divine organism

—in the words of Scripture, "the Body of Christ." We believe that in Baptism we are made members of Christ, organically and vitally related to Him and to our fellow-Christians, as parts of His Body, the Church. We believe that it is through this relationship that we become partakers of the divine nature and recipients of the divine grace, through our spiritual and sacramental union with Him. We look upon religion not as purely an individual relationship to God but as fundamentally also a social or group relationship to Him—a relationship the establishment, maintenance, and development of which depend in part upon others and our fellowship with them.

Now this emphasis upon the "socialness" or group character of religion is characteristic also of the latest and best scholarship in the psychology of religion and the philosophy of religious education. The primacy of the group (in this case the Christian community, the Church) in religious education is becoming increasingly recognized. Christian character, it is held by the best contemporary thinkers in religious education, is to be achieved, not in isolation through an individual experience of God, but, in large part, through relationship to and interaction with the Christian community.

Professor Theodore G. Soares of the Department of Religious Education in the University of Chicago, himself a Baptist minister, says: "The most significant contribution that social psychology has made to education is the concept of personality as achieved in the interaction of the human organism with its material and social environment. . . . The fundamental principle in religious education is that the person shall share the experiences of the religious group." (*Religious Education,* pp. 17, 35.) Such a statement from such a source is a needed corrective to the tendency in some quarters toward excessive individualism and intellectualism in religion.

Again, the Church with its doctrine, discipline, and worship, worked out through centuries of experience and experimentation, is needed educationally in order to determine the goal for the educational process. As stated in chapter seven, the establish-

ing of the goal is the first step in religious education; and this goal, at least in its fundamentals, should be socially rather than individually determined.

The Churchman, therefore, who holds to a high view of the Church feels at home in the new religious education,

(1) Because it lays emphasis upon the group and fellowship in the group—upon the social rather than the individualistic conception of Christianity.

(2) Because it recognizes the experience of worship and service as being, equally with instruction, a part of the curriculum.

(3) Because it conceives of the Church itself as the school *par excellence,* in which all the members are pupils and all the activities constitute the curriculum.

When religious experience was thought of chiefly in intellectual terms, as consisting of the learning of certain facts and principles, it almost necessarily became an individual attainment. But when it is thought of in terms of group experiences in Christian living, it automatically becomes a social enterprise, a practical expression of the Communion of Saints. Consequently, the deeper one's sense of the Church and the more strongly one holds to the importance of participation in its corporate and sacramental life, the more congenial one finds the new religious education.

If we once fully grasp and wholeheartedly accept the educational conception of the Church, it will have certain practical consequences in the Church's attitude toward its task, its leadership, and its members.

(1) *It will interpret its entire task in terms of religious education.*

"In a general but vital and fundamental sense the whole life of the Christian Church is an educational enterprise, and its entire work is that of teaching. This appears in the fact that the Church as a whole bears all the typical characteristics of any educational enterprise. The marks of an educational enterprise are: (a) that it concerns itself with growing, developing persons; (b) that it seeks to engage these persons definitely in some form of study or purposeful activity; (c) that its

primary interest, in so doing, is the development of the persons themselves, rather than the objective results of their activity; (d) that it seeks to communicate to them, while they in turn seek to profit by, the riper experience of others; (e) that the whole process has its face set toward the future, aiming to promote their development, and to help them gain new knowledge, added power, and richer character; (f) that the whole process, again, is socially motived, both in that it implies some sort of fellowship, and in that its goal is the betterment, not merely of individuals, but of human society. All of these marks are characteristic of the Christian Church." (Dr. L. A. Weigle, *The Teaching Work of the Church.*)

"It will be found that in however detailed form the objectives or the purposes of the Church may be stated, they are all essentially educational purposes. They involve effecting desirable changes in persons, and this is exactly what education is. These objectives are to be realized by providing certain requisite experiences. . . . Religious education is the basic method by which the Church undertakes all its functions. It is the method of a total program." (Harry C. Munro, *The Director of Religious Education.*)

If education is "the modification of character through experience," and its purpose is, as Professor Thorndike says, "the production of desirable and prevention of undesirable changes in a developing human being"; if the aim of religious education is "to develop such a conscious relationship to God in Christ as will lead to Christ-like living"—then truly the work of the Church is educational in the highest sense and should be so considered. Even its philanthropic and social activities should have as their real objective not merely the relief of immediate distress but the bringing about of such changes in all the persons and groups concerned as will make such ministrations ultimately unnecessary.

In the service of worship, in the sermons, Church School lessons, and young people's programs, the aim is to bring about, under the guidance and blessing of the Holy Spirit, such development of character, such enrichment of Christian personality, as may be needed and possible.

But this means that we are to recognize all the experiences touching the life of the individual or group as being potentially educational. Participation in the organized activities of the

Church is educational, as truly as is participation in worship or study. Service projects of the Church School or of the various organizations of the parish are to be evaluated not merely in terms of their material accomplishment but (what is more important) their educational effect upon the character of those who take part in them. Social and recreational activities are educational opportunities of great significance. The choice of a vocation by our young people, and the grounds on which their choice will be made, reveal and affect character and are therefore an educational problem of major importance.

Recognizing the educational significance of these aspects of Church life and endeavoring to measure up to these opportunities, two guiding principles should be remembered:

(a) *The primacy of the pupil.* In the building and equipment of the parish house, not conformity to convention, or even beauty, is the final test, but the need of the pupil. In the selection of lesson courses, not price or publisher, but the need of the pupil; in the development of parochial organizations and programs, not traditional loyalties and popular conventions, but the need of the pupil, should be the determining factor throughout.

(b) *Growth through participation.* The older conception of the pupil as the passive recipient of the teacher's instruction must give way to the conception of the class and school as a group of comrades in the Way, some older, some younger, but all to the limit of their respective abilities sharing in responsibilities as in service, and together learning to live the Christian life in God's great family.

(2) *It will insist upon competent educational leadership in the parish.*

Not simply trained teachers in the Church School, although these are highly desirable, but (what is more fundamental) trained leadership in educational administration. This may mean an employed director of religious education, but we are not convinced that this is necessarily the best solution of the prob-

lem. Certainly it is not practicable for the vast majority of our parishes.

Disregarding the many cases where the so-called director of religious education is in reality either a high-class parish secretary or an assistant pastor without technical training as an educator, and thinking only of those who have adequate professional training in the techique of religious education, we find many problems involved. If the director of religious education has sufficient professional training to enable him to speak with authority, it will not be easy for him to submit his educational policies to a rector who is not thus qualified. If it is attempted to solve the problem of relationship by a division of functions, the director taking the (strictly) educational phases of the work and the rector retaining the preaching, pastoral work, and general administration, it is apt to do violence to the principle enunciated above that the whole program of the Church is educational, and it makes difficult the working out of a unified program.

On the whole we are inclined to think that the true solution of the problem of educational leadership will be found in a new conception of the pastoral work of the rector—which will in turn greatly modify the program of training given in theological seminaries. The conception of the Church as a school of Christian living and of its task as being essentially educational,

"will make Christian religious education instead of a subordinate side issue carried on by auxiliaries, the basic method and the central phase of the total program. It means that the person who directs and supervises the educational program really directs the total Church, since every aspect of the total Church life will necessarily be subservient to the educational objectives and methods. It means that the total resources of the Church will be laid under tribute to these same objectives. It means that the office of the minister as traditionally conceived and commonly practised is totally inadequate, if, indeed, not quite obsolete. The conception of the Church here presented calls for a new type of professional leadership, differently trained and functioning in quite a different way from the traditional ministry." (Munro, *op. cit.*)

This statement may be in some respects over-emphatic, but it is

correct in calling attention to the fundamentally educational nature of the Church's program.

Granted that the rector of the large parish will need an assistant, clerical or lay, man or woman, to carry some of the educational responsibilities of the parish, it is nevertheless true that the rector himself should be, by virtue of professional training as well as by virtue of his office, the real head and leader of the educational program of the parish. The seminaries today are very far from giving such preparation. The educational conception of the Church's task must give us an educational conception of the rector's responsibilities, and this in turn must insure for him in the seminary adequate training in the principles and methods of modern religious education.*

(3) *It will provide for all its members an adequate experience of Churchmanship.*

The experience of Churchmanship, according to Professor Soares of the University of Chicago, is one of the greatest needs of the children and youth of today, and few of them are being given it in any adequate way. The experience of Churchmanship should include some knowledge of the history, doctrine, and worship of the Church. It should involve also the habit of regular attendance on the services of the Church, with devout and intelligent participation therein. But these are not all. Deeper than knowledge, deeper than external habits, are the loyalties of the heart, the abiding attitudes toward the great realities of life. Our young people need the sense of belonging to something, so that they will feel toward their Church somewhat the same glowing enthusiastic devotion that some of them feel toward their high school baseball team or college fraternity. And this loyalty to the Church must be rooted in a still deeper and more fundamental loyalty to Christ, the Head of the Church.

---

* This whole subject is ably and comprehensively treated in a pamphlet entitled *Leadership in Religious Education,* by the Rev. John W. Suter, Jr., which may be obtained from The National Council, Department of Religious Education, 281 Fourth Ave., New York.

Another experience of Churchmanship which youth needs is the consciousness of the Church as a fellowship, a brotherhood. Membership in the Church must be made to mean something very real. The Communion of Saints must become something more than an article in the Creed; it must be made a daily experience.

A third experience of Churchmanship which we must provide adequately for everyone is the experience of real worship, both as member of a group and in the solitude of his own heart, both through the Sacraments and services of the Church and through the habit of private devotions in the Church alone and in God's great outdoor temple of nature; both in the solemn ceremonial and in the inner communion of the heart, the practice of the presence of God.

There are no ready-made methods for accomplishing these results. More than anything else they will depend upon the personality of the teacher himself. Here as everywhere else the supreme law of sound pedagogy is, "Be what you would have your pupils become." We can give only that which we have received; we can teach only as we have first lived.

"They that are teachers shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." (Dan. 12: 3, RVM.)

PRINTED IN
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BY
MOREHOUSE PUBLISHING CO.
MILWAUKEE, WIS.

Date Due

O 30 '42

O 30 '47

N 13 '47

AP25[illegible]

AP25'55

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library
1 1012 01029 3100